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The Author -



THE CONDUCT OF MAN.



THE
CONDUCT OF MAN.

A

Didactic Epistolary Poem.

LONDON:

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1811.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The Epistles which treat of "The Nature of Man," in opposition to the system of Self-Love, are reserved for future publication.

London, December, 1811.

ERRATA.

Page 4, line 22, *for* or Wales! *read* or in Wales!

24, — 18, *for* As much, nay, more so than,
read As much as—more so than—

50, — 28, *for* the false *read* this false

58, — 13, *for* Fashions *read* Fashion's

100, — 25, *for* presents with a future good,
read present as with future good,

144, — 6, *for* reverence from all; *read* reverence on all;

177
251
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INTRODUCTORY EPISTLE.

HOME! O, my Country! O, Penates sooth!
My lov'd relations! and my friends of youth!
Ah! happy home! there, there alone, peace reigns!
In plenty pleasures! scarcity in pains!
There, only there, live harmony and mirth!
Thou sweetest choicest spot upon the earth!
Dear art thou home! when thy full bosom yields
Vines, dates, and olives, from thy fertile fields;
And wheat and corn, in thy luxuriant grounds,
With cheapness give profusion without bounds.
Dear art thou home! altho' thy climate rude
Make frugal pulse thy children serve for food!
Ah! happy those who in thy precinct dwell,
Tho' their sole drink come from the crystal well!
Blest is thy hearth, and all around it plac'd!
By day and night with ceaseless pleasure blest!
Blest in thy clime is every living thing,
Beast, Bird, and Mortal,—from the clown to king!—

All Nations, all, the savage and polite,
Enthusiastic, in home's praise unite.

Cold is the heart, than ice more cold or snow,
Which thinks of home without attachment's glow !
Dull is his soul who loves not natal spot,
Where parents rear'd him, and first friends were got !

Lo ! valiant soldiers to their country come
With shouts march cheerily, to sound of drum :
And when each man descries the native plain,
He weeps for joy, that he is there again.
The sailors say, when, on the eve to sail,
The loosen'd canvass flaps upon the gale,
“ Farewel my Country, and Friends, left behind !”
For distant lands the sheets spread in the wind—
They sail—the billows on the ship's ribs foam—
While land exists, all eyes are fix'd on home !

Thus, act all Men ! the Alpine Mountaineer
Prefers his region to another sphere ;
Midst barren heath, white frost, and chilling snow,
His food is relish'd ; and his spirits glow
With country's love, inspiring a disdain
For cluster'd vineyards, or the bearded plain.
And who in Britain, if Britannia's son,
Would quit her climate for another's sun ?
Or if hard fate imposes the decree
For east or west to navigate the sea ;
In future days, tho' crown'd with wealth and power,
A thought for country will beguile an hour
In sphere Columbian, or in Indian clime,
And falling tears impede the course of Time.—

When distant land with 'exil'd step we tread,
The sight, the mention, of all things home-bred,
(Dress, music, manners,) in each part, or whole,
Waft joy extatic from each sense to soul.
How feels the Briton when abroad they sing
Rule great Britannia, or God save the King?
Methinks my countryman, with honest smile,
Exclaims, "No country is like Britain's Isle!
"O, let me see it, Fate, before I die,
"Or now destroy me, while my blood runs high!"—
To rugged Swiss, who serves for foreign pay,
Play *Ran des Vaches*, and he will run away,
Forsaking luxury, his heart so thrills
To see his country and its snow-capp'd hills.—
Behold an Indian unto Europe brought,
All things insipid seem unto his thought;
But in his view should tree exotic stand,
Which was familiar in his native land,
With joy he cries, entwin'd around the tree,
"My Country rear'd thee, and thou'rt all to me!"—

Then come, ye thoughts, which to my soul convey
My Home as present, from which now away.
Recede all else, and let these pleasing views
Fill my whole Fancy, and entwine my Muse.
Recal the time when, as a boy, I went
To school, on play than learning more intent.
Show how reluctantly I stepp'd along
When apprehensive of my master's thong:

And how with pleasure to the school I flew
When, like good boy, my task assign'd I knew.
Recal all those, who, in my childish days,
Shar'd in my troubles, and partook my plays :
Once dear companions : but those days now flown
The greater part unheard of, and unknown,
To me are lost : and of the few I see
The half too proud are to descend to me.
I blame them not : for in the lapse of years
One learns the diff'rence between poor and peers ;
Altho' in youth a happy time there be
When no distinctions among men we see,
But welcome all, from no one turning back,
Be he My Lord, Sir George, or humbler Jack.—
Farewel to them—for now my fancy flies
O'er hill, and dale, and far expanded skies,
To that sweet spot I designate my home
Whence pleasures came, and from whence still they come.—

Methinks I see, depicted at full length,
The healthful plains where grew my manhood's strength.
I tell not where ; for little it avails,
In England, Ireland, Scotland, or Wales !—
I see the spot where often I have stood
To draw the fishes from the river's flood.
I view the pools (for well I know them yet !)
Where most I caught, with baited hook, or net.
I see the field, and once eventful spot,
Where first the Partridge fell before my shot.

Now pass the woods before me, by degrees,
Where sat the black-cocks perch'd upon the trees :
And where, at sun-rise, as at fall of night,
I kill'd the wild-dove, or laid wait for kite.
There stands Farm House, wherein I often got
What stay'd my hunger, or allay'd my drought,
In summer gay, as in the winter drear,
With hearty welcome—which enriches cheer !—
Here the bleak moors before my vision lie ;
Each spot, familiar, pleasant to my eye.
With gun in hand, and with my pointer sure,
With friends, methinks, I hunt about this moor.
Mark ! the dog winds ! he moves not now, at all—
The moor-cocks rise—I aim—I fire—none fall !
Now come my comrades, one by one, and jeer ;
“ I would have hit if I had been as near ! ”
While I reply, a little piqued and vex'd,
“ I'll make amends for this shot in the next.”—
How things all move about me to and fro !
Fresh objects coming as the old sights go !
My fav'rite Spaniel (for such dog I had)
His tail now wags, and licks my hand, so glad.
I move, he moves : I stop, and he stops then :
Lest I should quit him and begone again.
He seems to say, in all his gestures kind,
“ Where'er you go, I'll follow close behind.”—
I see the hares reposing in their seat.
Now, now I chase them with the greyhounds fleet !
And now, like poacher, I set out, in storm
To trace their steps, and shoot them in the form.—

Ah!—all is vanishing my sight before!—
I saw all this! I see it now no more!—

Say not, I sing what common place appears.
I answer, “ Give me judgment from my peers.”
Let no one judge me, who has never spent
His youth in country’s sweet retirement :
And after that, by destiny, been forc’d
To quit its pleasures which delighted first.
Let no one judge me, who has never known
Save tasteless bus’ness in a sooty town :
And never lost the noisy Strand from view,
Save on a Sunday ; for an hour or two ;
When, for his health, as for the sake of sport,
He rides to Highgate, or to Hampton Court ;
But few short miles remov’d from smoke, to seek
Draughts of pure air to serve him for a week.
Let none such say I am prolix, and tame,
When things I tell that are unknown to them.
Ah ! such prolixity to me is sweet !
In each particular old friends I meet !
And may I hope to those it is sweet too
Who in my song see days that they once knew.
So two friends meeting, when by many a year
Time has grown older since they last were near,
With warmth embrace, talk, joke, and laugh, and sing,
Each other telling each advent’rous thing ;
While passing strangers look upon the pair
With no emotion, save the vacant stare.

Hold—prospects come, more solemn than the last,
To bring to memory days long since past.
In some points gloomy, and in others bright,
The grateful vision opens to my sight.

Behold the Mansion, where, in early age,
Kind Parent taught me, from the holy page,
The various duties whose neglect were sin
To God, myself, my neighbour, and my kin.
Ah! well I mind that as in years I sprung
For age instruction she gave me, when young;
And kept me, oft, from play my task to get,
By coaxing lur'd, or frighten'd by a threat.
But when, as child, the bus'ness of the day
Was at an end she lik'd to see me play.—
Behold the room! behold the very seat
Which most she us'd!—my stool is at her feet!—
There, oft, I sat, my arm upon her knee,
Not as with parent but companion, free,
To ask and have whatever I inclin'd,
Or to amuse or to instruct the mind.
Yes! I remember (and the thought is dear!)
There, oft, I sat her fairy tales to hear;
Until my fancy figur'd, in the room,
A dozen fairies, each across a broom;
And when, at night, my body shook all o'er,
She chid my fear, and said she'd tell no more;
Whilst I, tight holding some part of her dress,
Wish'd her to tell, but was afraid to press;

With wistful eyes surveying, as she spoke,
To find if fairies really were joke.
She stopp'd at last, when I with fright was cold,
And said "Such tales I tell to make you bold.
"I do not fear: and why, my boy, should you?"—
"Indeed," said I, "the candle's flare burns blue!"
At this, in mirth, she sometimes shook her head:
Or, angry, sent me earlier to my bed.—
With constant toil, she, like a gard'ner, shrewd,
Work'd, that the fruit she rear'd might turn out good;
That, when, full grown, to man's estate I came,
I might be man in fact, as in the name.—

See! pleasure flies!—mark, advent now of gloom!—
Methinks I see my Parent, in this room,
Weak, pale, and sickly, carried to her couch
Of pain complaining; and lamenting much
To see those weep who stand around her bed.
I see her die: and in her coffin laid.
And now the priest, to ease us of our pain,
Says, "thro' Christ Jesus the dead live again."
Alas! my steps now follow on the bier
Which holds remains that are to me so dear.
The church-yard now I tread, with foot infirm,
Wherein will lie her body for the worm,
And now, in grief, I stand, depriv'd of force,
On the grave's brink that is to hold her corse.—
Now comes Reflection.—Like fix'd statue, I
Think, time's not far when I must also die.

And, as my eye around the grave is cast,
I sigh, to see all come to this at last.
Now, reason tells me, in my revery,
“ Some one will do like offices for thee !
“ Unless as vagrant, in entangled wood,
“ Thy body doom’d be to serve beasts for food ;
“ Or by some chance it fall into the surf ;
“ To toss in ocean, not repose in turf.—”
Now, self forgot, for dead my tears run o’er,
As the black pall into the tomb I lower.
And when the coffin the grave’s bottom finds,
I say, “ Farewel, thou dearest of my friends !”
And, in my grief, I care not how things go
Now that my Parent lies at rest so low.—
Hark ! earth rough spades upon the body shove.
Now, lost to sight, it waits for joys above.
Grief brings on Piety. I weep, and pray.—
Be her’s my life ! be her’s my latter day !—

Now, from this scene of sorrow, I regain
The place where living relatives remain.
Much fain they’d ask ; but, to inquire afraid,
Their looks demand, tho’ silent, for the dead.
Now, forcing spirits, at each instant, they
Their thoughts divert from wandering that way.
Severe the task ! for to the mourning eye
Each object seen recalls its misery.
Abroad they stir not, but in grief they cry,
“ Here once she walk’d, where now walk wretched I !”

And in the house, as when without the door,
They say, " she liv'd here who is now no more !"—
Yet (strange, tho' true !) in time soon wore away
The sad remembrance of that woeful day.
For Heaven has order'd, for the good of men,
Once buried, dead are soon forgotten then.—
The thriving floweret which perfumes the air
Amidst a heap, (or rose, or lily fair,)
And sweetly blooms, with care we daily tend.
'Tis pluck'd—it dies—we throw it from the hand—
Next day is seen the place where it was got.
Yet miss'd it is not in the peopled plot !
So 'tis with us who in life's journey tread.
The living fill up void made by the dead !
Hence, in my breast, of parent dear bereft,
Grief's first wound bleeds not, tho' its scar be left :
And now, tho' often in idea miss'd,
I do not weep, because I think she's blest.

Lo ! darkness, seated on a cloud, descends !
Expands before me ! and the vision ends !
All, all is hid !—now that I've seen the whole,
Fancy shuts up her mansion in the soul.—
Ah ! traitor Fancy ! how thou dost beguile !—
I have not left my chamber all this while !!

Hail, my sweet Home ! my mind is still with thee !
This dream has made thee visible to me !
Brought hills, and dales, thy whole extent, to sight,
As the birds see thee who look down in flight !—

Hail, my relations ! much respected ! lov'd !
To my mind present, tho' so far remov'd !
In scenes of sorrow, as in scenes of mirth,
No true friends else have I met upon earth.
For I have found, and, to confess, feel pride,
The friends that rear'd me are worth all beside.
Let flatt'ry pass to those who can submit
To saint a Lord, or deify a Wit.
In loving heart can adulation shoot ?
Affection kills it, as the blight kills fruit !—
To you, lov'd relatives, my thoughts will fly,
Tho' the Atlantick should between us lie.
Tho' borne to Africk, by the call of Fate,
My thought will early find you out, as late.
Tho' borne to India, which is farther still,
I can in thought be with you, when I will.
On sea, on land, tho' to the world's end brought,
I shake your hands, at pleasure, with my thought.
And in vexation, as in mirth's gay pride,
Thought holds speech with you, seated by my side.
Each well-known lineament in darkness drear,
Thought sees, as plainly as in mid-day clear.
Tho' Ocean roar, amidst the deaf'ning noise,
Still can my thought hear whisper from your voice.
Let vertic thunder bellow with the deep,
Thought hears your breathing as you lie asleep.
In war, in peace, in harmony, in strife,
In ev'ry possible event of life,
Wherever plac'd, or whatsoever I do,
While life exists, in thought I'll live with you.

For, thank'd be Heaven, from birth until the grave,
In thought I'm free, altho' in person slave!—
So the bright Sun (from which, thro' vaulted sky,
Heat warms our bodies, and light fills the eye,)
Retain'd, by laws immutable, in place,
Its rays dispatching o'er extent of space,
Tho' distant far, communicates, with ease,
With every object in Heaven's boundaries.

What now I am to your kind care I owe,
In things I have! as in the things I know!
From you my tongue its earliest accents caught;
By you my infancy at first was taught.
Thro' you my mind to science was inur'd;
In virtue nurtur'd, and of vices cur'd.—
For all this, what return can I impart?
I've none to give—except a grateful heart!—
From your kind hands I first received a lyre
To fan the ardour of poetic fire.
Its strings my fingers you taught to run o'er;
And made my soul on inspiration soar.
'Twas you that first instructed me in Man
Ere yet my outset in the world began.
And now I find (not without ample cause)
Just what he is you told me that he was.—
Judge then, with how great pleasure I convey
To you the earliest labour of my lay.
In love and gratitude to you I bring
“The ways of Man,” which I prepare to sing.

Unknown, attend me thro' each bustling crowd
Where I must mix ; with humble, as with proud.
Unseen, assist me, with your counsel sweet,
To paint the manners of the groups I meet.
Restrain my steps, whenever in the throng
I move too hastily my way along.
But help me forward, when in course I seem
Impair'd in strength to struggle against stream.
In short ; Man's Conduct while I bring to view,
Be you my Patrons ! be Companions you !

Avaunt, ye Critics—smooth your looks severe—
Let no revilings come Affection near.
Let this, respected, be as neutral ground,
Where Peace exists, tho' War be heard around.



EPISTLE I.

ARGUMENT.

1. Man evidently born for Society. 2. In what point of view all Mankind are equal. 3. Society kept together by the gradations in the ranks of men. 4. How necessary these gradations are for the general good. 5. Absurd to talk about equality. 6. That a place is allotted for every one in society, to be acquainted with which is the duty and interest of every individual. 7. Necessity of observing established rules of any kind when sanctioned by common consent in society. 8. Absurdity of violating the usages of the world with respect to conduct exemplified. 9. That it is wrong to make up our minds too hastily with respect to the character of our neighbours. 10. Folly and danger of bragging in any way about oneself. 11. The portrait of a self-sufficient vaunting fop; and the contemptible figure such a personage cuts in the eye of a rational man. 12. Wherein consists proper, wherein improper pride. 13. Cursory remarks on the conduct proper to observe in the common transactions of life. 14. Why it is wrong to form friendships too hastily. 15. How the term Friend is misapplied in the world. 16. A cause assigned why the actions of men are so changeable and inconsistent.
-

1. VIEW every class of animated things
(Or forest beast, or bird with airy wings)
Which nature leads (resembling) to like wants,
In consort flocking to each other's haunts.
Few live recluse; all nature is entwined
With links of fellowship 'tween kind and kind.
In Man such various qualities we see,
As make him fitted for society.

We trace its progress, from the childish state
 Which loves in play to make like age its mate,
 To those more ripen'd, met for social call
 Clubb'd at a tavern, or freemason's hall.
 For social union men by nature made,
 Like plants unearh'd, when plac'd without it fade.

2. The Human Race as sent from nature's hand
 This much resembling on a footing stand.
 One sovereign wisdom has created all :
 Thro' him we prosper ; and thro' him we fall.
 What forms a beggar fabricates a king :
 The name is diff'rent, but alike the thing.
 Earth is but earth ; and must to earth return
 Enclos'd in coffin, or in gilded urn.
 Survey, in turns, the poor, the rich, the great ;
 The whole are subject to a common fate.
 They're born ; they live ; and then, they likewise die ;
 Alas ! forgotten in the dust to lie.
 So ends the race ! thus fleet Man's days away !
 The first and last, alike, are brittle clay
 Quicken'd with life, a day or year to run ;
 Like clocks wound up, and like the clock undone !

3. In nature's works, a stated order gain'd,
 Combines a whole, sustaining, and sustain'd.
 This gives support to that, and that, again
 Refills the wastes which from the other drain.
 So Man to Man has mutual resort ;
 Each on the other resting for support,

In nat'ral contract, or in civil tie.
 Thus comes duration to society !
 All have their stations ; and, in diff'rent ways,
 What this one does that other one repays.
 The wife, who shares in a kind husband's care,
 From him receives her food, and things to wear ;
 The loving father, who his children rears,
 Looks for requital from them in his years ;
 And the fond lovers, who their sweet vows troth,
 Live for the mutual happiness of both ;
 And thus the friend with the acquaintance meets,
 To share life's bitters, or partake its sweets.—
 In civil union, we will also find
 That all mankind are most compactly join'd :
 The clown who labours, and the titled peer,
 Tho' parted seemingly, in fact are near.
 These only prosper as those others speed ;
 The clown is fed by those his labours feed :
 So all men living (view them as you will)
 Are common servants to each other still.

4. Mark a large engine, place it here, or there,
 To raise a weight into the pend'lous air :
 Ten cubits high this weight's to be convey'd ;
 If all the wheels in concert act, 'tis laid
 On the wish'd spot ;—a pillar ! or a wall !—
 Should one small wheel (the smallest of the small)
 Refuse its part (thro' any cause) to play,
 The Engine's faulty, and its powers give way.

What then avail the greatest wheels that roll?
 This little member has derang'd the whole!
 And the weight tumbles ere it gains its place.—
 Like this large Engine are the Human Race:
 Without nice concert can their projects live?
 So drops the weight when Engines' wheels misgive!
 'Twas wisely order'd, by a mighty hand,
 That ranks in man diversified should stand;
 Else how could sire initiate the son
 In things that should not or that should be done?
 Without this check, might not an urchin say.
 "Do, father, hush! for I will have my way:
 "'Tis my look out to go to heaven or hell."—
 So, in the civil point of view, as well,
 Some must be plac'd subordinate, and poor:
 Else who would till? or who the ground manure?
 Then things would wander from their fix'd routine,
 And Spring and Autumn would revolve in vain.
 If all were equal, men would shortly die;
 For nature's bounty would refuse supply;
 And earth become (where now luxuriance is)
 A barren waste, a dreary wilderness.

5. The various members of the body's frame
 Mark faithful outlines which our notice claim;
 For certain functions every member made,
 Performs its duty, as a man his trade.
 A mutual help, in harmony they lie
 The nicest semblance of society;

Where, civil diff'rence causes common good ;
 Else, would confusive anarchy have stood. .

Equality in rank's an airy thing ;
 'Twill end in fancy, as 'twill there begin
 A wild romance, a visionary plan
 No way promoting Liberty in man ;
 But leading solely (in the mind's defect)
 To chase a shadow, and the thing neglect.
 Man, in all states the whole world over, draws
 The surest Liberty from well-fram'd laws,
 Whose mandates, not too feeble nor too rough,
 Give not too much, but give to each enough.

6. Each class of men, whatever the degree,
 Will find a level in society.
 For wealth, or poverty, for rank, or wit,
 A place is furnish'd where each man may sit.
 Who soars beyond it with presumptuous might
 Will be (like Ic'rus) humbled in his flight.
 Who sinks beneath where he was meant to stand,
 Is neither fit to serve, nor to command.

7. As reason dictates so your conduct guide ;
 Follow the wise, but ways of fools avoid.
 For conduct rules are settled, by mankind,
 As laws, our ways to regulate and bind.
 To act 'gainst rules establish'd, or allow'd,
 Shows folly's empire in the mind avow'd.
 What all men think, or points where most agree,
 Should be consider'd as from error free.

You would not tell one, impudent and rude,
 " I thank you, Sir, you are extremely good !"
 Nor would you strike one who was kind and civil,
 And say, in anger, " Get you to the devil !"
 Were you to act thus, saying, " I forgot,"
 The world would style you madman, or a sot.

8. Think not to find (such thought is worthy blame)
 Men made for you ; but shape yourself to them.—
 Suppose two trav'lers, who the same road go,
 Stopp'd on a sudden by a river's flow ;
 One asks a man, by chance then passing by,
 " Where can we cross ? is ford, or bridge here nigh ?"
 The stranger says, " When two miles on, you'll view
 " The bridge I cross'd at ; there may also you."—
 The stranger thank'd, then speeds where bus'ness lies—
 On goes one trav'ler—now the other cries,
 " God ! what a round !"—his friend says, " mind not that,
 " The water's deep here"—says the other, " What !
 " Shall I go there, when here such short road's had ?
 " A furlong's better than two miles, 'fore Gad !
 " Take you the round : for you, when cross'd, I'll stay."—
 He tries to ford : in vain he makes essay,
 Stones are so slipp'ry ; and so deep the stream.
 His dry-shod friend, now cross'd, rebukes his whim,
 And this vain fool, chagrin'd and wet, is forc'd
 To do at last what he refus'd at first.

Mark well this fable ; and its moral see,
 Teach conduct fitting for society.

Throughout life's journey (you will find it true)
 As others act 'tis ever best to do :
 For fords are mark'd in the affairs of men,
 Thro' means of which we may 'scape toil and pain :
 And those who shun them, by their deed, entail
 The scoff of others—which at last they wail—
 Is he much better than the trav'ling fool,
 Whose head-strong temper breaks each social rule,
 And leads him madly thro' his life t' opine,
 " No man's freaks I'll please, let men yield to mine !"
 Admire him rather who conforms at once ;
 The one is wise man, and the other dunce.

9. Form not too soon your characters of men :
 On hasty judgment follows erring ken.
 Exclaim not " scoundrel ;" and when ask'd " for why ?"
 Say that you judg'd so from the brow, or eye,
 Or this or that expression of the face.
 How oft, tho' wrongly, we thus judge our race !
 Who has not heard (such speech some men think wit)
 " That man's no conjuror : I'll lay a bet."—
 " Why so ?" in answer, with unmeaning stare,
 He cries, " God bless you ! he's so very fair !
 " Pray, sir, attentively survey that phiz :
 " Whoe'er saw wise man with a face like his ?
 " His forehead's flat ; it should be arch'd, and high ;
 " His lips want thickness ; what a listless eye !—
 " 'Tis truth I tell you—nothing I aver
 " But what by rule is prov'd in Lavater !"—

Woe to men's characters, as well as sense,
 When fools this way a scrutiny commence ;
 Then errant knaves with honest men may class,
 And wisdom gain the epithet of Ass.

10. As of another, so of self, be slow
 To vaunt the qualities, where'er you go ;
 Say not " my talents rate 'bove common run :"
 Leave it for others to decide thereon.
 This fact in daily instances we meet,
 The most conceited have least solid wit !
 Just God ! how laughable, to hear the fuss
 With which some men in company discuss
 Their powers of mind ; both nat'ral and acquir'd—
 " Ere ten years old the muse my soul inspir'd :
 " And now," says one, " a large portfolio's full
 " With odes and sonnets, written when at school."—
 This speech scarce finish'd, lo ! another cries,
 " My forte, believe me, in the classics lies :"
 Then straightway shouts, " arms and the man I sing !"
 And bawls out twenty first lines in a string ;
 All which, for sake of shewing learning, he
 Keeps fresh for service, in his memory.—
 A third exclaims, with tone and air as high,
 " Not with the ancients, but the moderns I
 " Am vers'd"—then asks his neighbour, " Pray, sir, you
 " Sprachen zie Deutsch ?—ou Français—parlez vous ?"—
 While this goes on, a tune another hums ;
 Saying (striking a board with fingers and his thumbs)

“ I would an instrument were here to play ;

“ In music’s art I hold myself *AU FAIT* !”

Of thousand instances, let these suffice

To shew what danger in such weakness lies.

Should a true poet question him that told

“ The Muse inspir’d me before ten years old ;”

And ask from him of the poetic art—

Heaven ! with pale face, and palpitating heart,

Thro’ words and looks, he clearly brings to view

That more he boasted than he knew to do.

Like danger all the race of boasters share :

The classic ; linguist ; or the music player.

Shun all pretence to what you have no right ;

A boaster’s pictur’d by a bubble’s flight !

Awhile it fills a little space in air ;

Then disappears ; and goes—no one knows where !

11. To bring self forth, to strange means men will stoop ;

Observe a fool inform surrounding group,

How high in rank all his associates move :—

None friends below him, but all friends above ;

His words run thus : “ All my friends are of weight :

“ With the prime minister I’m intimate ;

“ And from the Treasury the other day

“ I rode home with him—sirs, believe, it, pray ;

“ For, truth to speak, (keep secret what you hear)

“ What few can boast of, I possess his ear—

“ Ah ! what a friend I lost in Mr. Pitt ;

“ His name, when mention’d, makes my tears start yet !—

- “ The oldest port wine in his cellar, oft
 “ In tête à tête, with pleasure have I quaff’d ;
 “ And in these moments, with a smile, or frown,
 “ I could have turn’d the nation upside down !
 “ But ill and good on man together fall ;
 “ For what Pitt was I now find Perceval !”
 On he proceeds,—ere we can utter ‘ Ah !’
 “ In points of fashion I am no way raw ;
 “ Thro’ me high women,—(be your tongue discreet)
 “ Part from their husbands, never more to meet—
 “ Lords, knights, and squires, have handsome fortunes won
 “ From me, alas ! in actions for crim. con.
 “ And great men’s mistresses——that’s true, sirs—hark !
 “ Once all and all I was with Marianne Clark !
 “ By heaven ! there lives not (on the fact rely)
 “ A cleverer woman, tho’ a rank O Fie !
 “ In her good graces largely I partook ;
 “ As much, nay, more so, than the Royal Duke.—
 “ The tricks I us’d, would hardly be believ’d,
 “ I pay my visits to her unperceiv’d :
 “ But I have heard (and so, by heaven, I feel)
 “ No kiss so sweet as is the kiss we steal !
 “ My foible’s Woman ; and to get at them,
 “ I, gamester like, risk ruin on the game ;
 “ Not fearing pistol, blunderbuss, or gun ;
 “ No faint heart ever a fair lady won !
 “ The grand point is to dash thro’ thick and thin,
 “ For love’s chief art is fearless to begin !
 “ God’s grace be with you ! daily in intrigues ;
 “ It is my trade ! as barber’s to make wigs !

“ But what of that !—so any other may,
 “ Who goes, like me, to opera and play ;
 “ And has instruction bought, from French *sieur*,
 “ To play his part well *en affaires de cœur* ;
 “ Retaining too a ballet-master, hir’d
 “ To learn the steps in dancing most admir’d ;
 “ As well as one of the Italian race,
 “ To teach new songs, with quaver and grimace,
 “ Which, most in vogue, most admiration bring.—
 “ ’Tis known that women fools like, if they sing !—
 “ A happier life than mine no mortal leads :
 “ My fortune makes me master of my deeds.
 “ At two I rise ; then dress ; mount horse ; and go
 “ To sport my figure off in Rotten Row.
 “ In Bond Street then, and in the Mall I flounce,
 “ To quiz the women, and drink cherry bounce.
 “ I nod a million times, and wave my hand
 “ As oft, to friends, thick as the sea-shore sand !
 “ Until, at last, so many friends I view,
 “ My tongue gets fagg’d, with saying, How d’ye do ?—
 “ Self-praise is bad—but, by the power on high,
 “ From far and near all court my company.
 “ I well remember when but very young,
 “ I got the nickname of Squire Witty Tongue !
 “ Then, what great wonder, if at thirty-four
 “ My wit makes mirth to keep men in a roar ?
 “ ’Bove all the Ladies——pardon ; I digress—
 “ ’Tis thought’s exuberance occasions this !
 “ As soon you may a flippan’t tongue restrain
 “ As bind with cords the billows of the main !—

“ To finish—thus I lounge all day about,
 “ Till evening calls me to a ball, or route ;
 “ And there I speak, at every step I stir,
 “ To some known duke, or marquis, baron, sir.
 “ Indeed, I think (some tell me ’tis not right)
 “ No man’s a man below the rank of knight !
 “ Unless his rent roll (like your servant’s here)
 “ Gives him to spend ten thousand pounds a-year.”——
 What good is got by bragging at this rate ?
 The splendid title “ Jackal of the Great !”

12. Pride sometimes worthy, sometimes wrong, we call :
 Yet he’s a fool who has no pride at all !—
 What name befits a man, who all day long
 (Himself untitled) lives with titled throng ;
 His station holding, like a dwarf at court,
 To bear with sarcasm, and occasion sport ;
 Then tells his neighbours, when he leaves their train,
 With lords I ate ; with lords I drank Champaign ;
 And after dinner, with my lady T——
 In tête à tête I sipp’d some rare bohea !—
 What name befits him ? tell it, if you can :
 A dunce ! an ass ! but, surely, not a man.—
 A title dazzles—yes ; the thing is clear :
 A comm’ner’s vain saluted by a peer :
 And many peers, if plac’d by the king’s side,
 Would lose their senses, thro’ excess of pride.
 But which most sense shows—(fool may tell me that !)
 He who saluted returns hat for hat ?

Or he who, notic'd by a great grandee,
 Roars thro' the street "That bow was made to me?"
 Rank should meet honour—give it what is due :
 Yet why not keep your own rank in your view?
 Because your friend has bags of wealth in store,
 Does it look well to say, "Lend me—I'm poor?"
 Or were he favour'd by the royal race,
 Must you for ever tease him for a place?
 How would you look should he refuse your boon?
 Chagrin'd; asham'd; fit subject for lampoon!
 Would you preserve a spotless name, and bright,
 Ask not your neighbour for a single doit,
 Unless you can, for services well known,
 Say, "This I have earn'd: give me what's my own."—
 Why beg from others? fool, befriend yourself!
 No free-born spirit ever stoop'd for pelf.
 What man could hear, and not resent, or fret,
 "I lent him money; and he owes it yet?"
 Or, would it not a noble spirit dash,
 To hear men say "he lives on other's cash?"
 Is not a shilling which we thank none for,
 Than fifty, sweeter, got thro' other's power?—
 I'd rather live (so would, I hope, most men :)
 With one pound free than as a slave with ten.
 I call that man, however rich, a knave,
 Who gains his riches as another's slave!
 I call that man, however poor, a god,
 Who, slave to no one, bends to no one's nod!—
 He's not worth sixpence, who will bend, and fall
 To dirt his shoes at every great man's call;

Or sneak his progress thro' contempt, and fear,
 To reach to title, or accursed gear ;
 The pimp of masters ; and the scoff of rank.
 What's such a one ? a cypher ! a mere blank !—
 Give me the man who thus disdain endures ;
 " I know my station, and wish you knew yours :
 " When my superior, to be rude, descends,
 " I thank, good God, that I have head and hands :
 " The world is wide, and many trades one finds
 " For honest industry and willing minds :
 " Then, fare you well ; and learn, from this harsh whim,
 " That master servant needs, as servant him."—
 This honest man, from guile and malice free,
 Does to another as he'd done by be ;
 For favours grateful, and from insult sore.
 Such men show character—what would you more ?
 Yet cry not ever, in a lofty air,
 " A curse upon it ! I'm as good as they're !"
 Nor at the levee of a great man, say,
 " Your lordship's made of more than mortal clay !" —
 Observe the middle, but avoid th' extreme
 'Tween servile fawning and a self esteem.
 A line there is, which cross'd, the thing is chang'd :
 A medium's right ! excess with folly's rang'd !

13. Mark well mankind, and you will find in them
 Much to admire, much also to condemn :
 Yet why for all take rule, as one behaves ?
 Tho' some men cheat, all are not therefore knaves !

That man's a hypocrite—agreed—what then?
 Because he is, is't so with other men?
 An honest man thinks others honest too,
 Himself in action being just and true,
 He fears no guile until the guile be done;
 We judge our neighbour as our own thoughts run!
 'Tis vile to hear a wretched elf cry out,
 " I once was cheated; and, beyond a doubt,
 " All men are like that rascal of a thief
 " Who stole my money without shame or grief,
 " And almost brought me unto ruin's brink—
 " Rogue, villain, since, I every mortal think."—
 Avoid suspicion: if you would enjoy
 The fleeting days of life, without alloy,
 View not (as things in water change their state;
 That seeming crooked which before was straight :)
 The fairest deeds perverted, and awry;
 Conform'd to evil with a jaundic'd eye.
 Yet sift men well: for every day we see
 The honest ruin'd by hypocrisy;
 And specious villains plotting, to deceive
 The unsuspecting who their phrase believe:
 Skill'd in the arts of flattery, and wile,
 (Like crafty syrens, in the cliffy isle,
 Who charm'd the ear with music's soothing power
 To draw the witless mariners ashore :)
 They lure their prey, and injure it when caught,
 Like ships to Scylla and Charibdis brought!
 Blame not the victims; for discourse so fair
 Would blindfold Sphinx, or Cerberus ensnare.

Who'd dream such speech had evil for its end :—
 " Dear sir, sweet sir, companion, my lov'd friend,
 " I grieve to see you in this troubled hour:
 " Can I relieve you? is it in my power?
 " I'd give my fortune to asswage your woe!
 " Just heaven, must virtue suffer thus below!
 " Above there's pleasure, friend, for pain felt here.
 " Excuse my weakness:—I must drop a tear!"—
 Ah! men there are (thus speaking) fair and civil,
 Your back once turn'd, who'd send you to the devil.
 Then trust not words; but let men's actions show
 Where your reliance, or mistrust, should go.
 A well-play'd guile, with talismanic arts,
 To vicious motives virtuous ends imparts:
 With white-wash'd outsides, men are oft display'd
 Clean to appearance, tho' within decay'd.

14. 'Tis light wit therefore, hastily to bind
 The knots of love, or the cement of friend,
 Before we sift, in order to descry
 Where imperfections, and one's virtues lie.
 Friends, Lovers, should (like mirrors when oppos'd)
 Reflect to both what is in each disclos'd;
 Give and receive, unasking and unask'd,
 With minds transparent, and their thoughts unmask'd.
 How would you feel (beyond a doubt perplex't!)
 This day to see a friend, and hear the next
 That bailiffs seiz'd him ere his bed he left;
 For swindling, murder, forgery, or theft;

And took him straight to the Old Bailey, where
 His guilt was prov'd, with evidence so clear,
 That instant death decreed was, and the wretch
 Died on the gallows, to enrich Jack Ketch?—
 All this might be in friendships form'd too soon;
 When strange at morning be not friend at noon!
 Nor give your hand unless you also can
 Give with it confidence to the same man.

15. How men act oddly in this point!—strange sight!
 All have an object, yet few aim aright!
 Some give “my friend” to any fool with gear;
 Vain in his house, or curricie, t’appear:
 Some chuse for friend a man because he’s clever;
 Tho’ well they know he’s rarely sober ever:
 And others (ah! how faulty the world’s state!)
 Call friend a villain, if he be but great:
 And, lo! some fools no mortal will approach
 (Witness, proud Welch! and the still prouder Scotch!)
 Save in his pocket there be found, a tree,
 From Noah’s flood, of genealogy.—
 Who seeks the virtuous? who makes them a friend
 For virtue’s sake, without another end?
 Who does this? tell me—such men are, I ween,
 Like Phoenix, spoke of altho’ never seen!
 Faults, where there be none, say not I conceive:
 Pursue the subject—sift it, and believe
 That man can err—the truth is sad, yet plain—
 What means A Friend?—you know not!—I’ll explain.

Man's friendships vary, in their modes, and names;
 Best Friend's a man with whom one drinks, rakes, games:
 Who, when one's creditors for money sue,
 Will, as a favour, lend one, pound or two.—
 Good Friend's a fool, a fop, a sot; in fine,
 One who invites you to his house to dine;
 With whom you drink (some twenty times a year)
 Champaign as water, Burgundy as beer.
 My Dear Friend means a despicable elf,
 Whose wife one kisses oft'ner than himself:
 Or, one whose manner sanctions debauchee
 To sleep, for nothing, with his Chere Amie.—
 Such is the fact—deny it if you can—
 If me you credit not, seek proof in man!

16. Who least knows man, thro' life enjoys most rest:
 For all agree that "bad are but the best!"—
 If much to praise, still much more to bemoan,
 In conduct's guidance, by our race is shown:—
 Mark how the vanes upon the steeples go;
 When wind's unsettled they move to and fro
 When wind is quiet they are still, and stay
 In same position while it blows same way.
 Just like the weathercocks, behold mankind
 In action govern'd by caprice of mind.
 The winds are not more changeable than man;
 At every moment, and in every plan,
 His morning projects ere the ev'ning fall;
 His actions proving contradiction all.

The whole world o'er, one picture mortals give ;
 " More inconsistent as they longer live !"
 This is man's portrait—so 'twill ever be !
 Past time has seen ! and future time will see !
 Yet blame not Nature—Nature does her part—
 What errors are, proceed from man's own heart.
 Can it be else, when the presumptuous elf
 To Nature trusts not, but relies on self ?
 Tho' what he does, or what he better ought,
 Kind Nature tells him, if he'll but be taught :
 Shows virtue's path ; and with perception nice,
 Outlines the roads of folly, and of vice ;
 And proves, with truth, by its innate decrees,
 We please not others when ourselves we please :
 For self and social diff'rent courses run :
 The social's virtue, but self-love is none !
 Do those in conduct nearer walk to God
 Who let self-love indite a moral code ?
 And yet, thus gifted, man to error flies :
 So fools their necks break when they blind their eyes !

EPISTLE II.

ARGUMENT.

1. The natural faculties of Man greatly under the dominion of Art.
 2. Attempt to shew that art cannot produce desires before affection from instinct.
 3. Endeavour to illustrate the foregoing reasoning.
 4. That art influences the conduct of all nations in some peculiar way or other.
 5. Art shewn to possess great influence over the sense of honour; and why it leads it so often in opposition to right.
 6. The perversion in the appearance of honour accounted for from the difference of Men's tempers.
 7. What is intended for good may turn to evil.
 8. Although false honour is prevalent, the beginning and ending of true honour are clearly assigned and universally understood.
 9. On temper.
 10. Acted on by various causes in the course of life.
 11. Early characteristics generally hold good through life.
 12. The benefits that may accrue from the application of art for the management of temper.
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1. **O**FT have we seen in garden, or in field,
A hundred forms the self-same hedge-row yield:
Here stands a pyramid; and there is cut
A splendid palace, or a humble hut;
On this hand plac'd a herd of oxen lie;
Here greyhound gaunt; and there a butterfly.
Do we not make, thro' Art, whene'er we please,
A quickset hedge take these varieties?
And thus, thro' Art, we see the race of man
Train Nature's gift, to any shape, or plan.

2. Observe the progress and the rise of taste ;
Thus Art's effects on Nature may be trac'd.

In youth, wise Nature, ere Art yet acts,
To simplest food (most nourishing) attracts ;
Makes this delicious, nought beside desir'd :—
First Taste is Instinct, in no way acquir'd !
Years pass—as habits spring, with course of years,
Strange alteration in the taste appears :
Now simple food is left for fiery spice ;
What erst seem'd poison, now to gust is nice !
Altho' this change thro' Art to Taste is brought,
Art gives not Taste tho' changing it when got :
The sense is Instinct ; Art may work on this.
So, with mind's senses, as external, 'tis !
Art often will associations cause,
Which give to active principles new laws,
And, guiding wholly on an acquir'd plan,
On Instinct's base build Artificial Man !

3. Each clime has manners, usages, and laws,
Peculiar to it as the air it draws ;
Yet all men's customs (be they good or odd,)
Come from some instinct plac'd in them by God.
Because the savage Indians tatoo,
Are they, for this, more knaves or fools than you ?
Because Chinese crush flat each trait of face,
Are they, for this, not of the human race ?
As slaves are Africs in creation plac'd
Because their ears they lengthen to their waist ?

They call this beauty—we exclaim 'tis rough—
 To them 'tis beauty—is not that enough?
 'Tis vile to load whole nations with abuse
 Because their customs are not here in use.
 Forsooth they're childish—I allow the word!
 What are our own? as childish! as absurd!
 We laugh at their's; and they in turn again
 View our's with mirth—O vanity of men!!
 Would savage mock, or would he be afraid,
 At sight of Judge in robe and wig array'd?
 To see a Fop would raise his laughter soon,
 In silk dress cloth'd, fring'd, border'd with galloon!
 Or female figure in a bodice press'd,
 In all the colours of the rainbow dress'd!
 At home, Judge, Fop, he points out as you ask:
 Tho' here to him they're characters in mask——

In polish'd nations as in savage state,
 We see absurdities preponderate:
 Yet what state fault in its own customs sees?
 So diff'rent dishes diff'rent palates please!

Still sure's this truth; that from the pole to pole
 Man is by nature one extensive whole.—
 What tho' deeds differ? all pursue same thing;
 Ten thousand ways to one fix'd spot may bring!
 So in a labyrinth the trav'ler's wend
 Thro' turnings, windings, scatter'd without end:
 No two in journey travel the same route;
 And yet, at last, one exit lets all out.—
 What diff'rence, pray, in European crown,
 Before which courtiers on their knees fall down,

And the red plume, which, to a savage fief,
Denotes the man who has the style of Chief?—
In Man's affairs, the difference we see,
Is more appearance than reality!

The whole world o'er, north, south, or east, or west,
Strange thoughts from Art rise in the human breast;
Things which men see done, or of which they're told
In youth, depart not from them when they're old:
No matter what—the turning of a thread
Thro' habit's power may fill the soul with dread!
How could this be if Instinct were not nigh?
Without a mould we cannot cast a die!
Give me a reason why the fair Gentoos
Brave the fire's anguish in its fiercest views,
With look compos'd, attir'd in fine parade,
Alive, to burn themselves with husband dead?
'Tis done as virtue; and to meet above.—
Must they not, first, then Duty know, and Love?
Right to Gentoos, this Britons say is wrong;
Yet the same Instincts unto both belong!—
Thro' habit deeds seem good with mischief fraught;
The savage Caffre, and the Hottentot
Are, thro' this cause, induc'd to think they must
Consign their parents, living, to the dust,
When sickly age has render'd them unfit
For life's exertions;—to walk, stand, or sit.
Love they their parents? yes! and grieve to see
The piteous state of their infirmity!
To cure their ills, they give them to the tomb,
Where earthly woe turns joy in world to come.

Love, then, and Duty, in a savage breast,
 To actions lead which polish'd men detest;
 And deeds there virtuous, honour'd by applause,
 Done here, expose us to offended laws.
 Thus he thinks right, what I think bad, you worse:
 A child is Nature! Art is Nature's nurse!

4. Why stray from home to prove this glaring truth?
 Do we not see in ripen'd age, as youth,
 What odd caprices human actions move?—
 To vice, or virtue, to dislike, or love!

Behold a Man in fashion's cradle nurs'd;
 In all the town of all gay men the first;
 From whom each fopling borrows air, dress, tone,
 Then struts along, and swears they are his own.
 Why stands this man in estimation high?
 Admir'd he is, yet no one knows cause why!
 You'll hardly credit (yet I vow 'tis true)
 He's base and vicious: yea, dishonest too;
 And yet because he money has, forsooth,
 He's prais'd by age, as he is ap'd by youth:
 'Tis known by all, and thro' the town 'tis said,
 His father "fool" he calls; his mother "jade;"
 But then, because he happens to be Lord,
 His promise bond is, gospel is his word.—
 The Caffre, Hottentot, and wild Gentoo,
 Would hate such person:—here, dislike him few!

5. Men see strange sights who go abroad I ween;
 Yet at our own doors stranger may be seen!

Which, told from home, would scarcely be believ'd—
 What is familiar passes unperceiv'd!
 Thus, Fashion see urge duty to despise :
 Then, Honour draws to sin, with open eyes ;
 Retaining proudly, in its way, the palm
 'Gainst social dictates, or the moral qualm.—
 See two men meet, who friends have been thro' life :
 One single is, the other has a wife :
 Since last they met some years have past ; of course
 They visit frequently, thro' choice not force.
 Now mark—the Bachelor says coolly, “ Ah !
 “ In fashion's realm 'twould give my name eclat
 “ Were I to strive (to use the common cant)
 “ A pair of horns on my friend's brow to plant.”
 He straight begins the lady to cajole ;
 My life, my love, my darling, and my soul,
 Flow from his lips ; and with a tender squeeze,
 With vows, and prayers, he woos her by degrees.
 At last the woman, thro' this villain's wiles,
 Yields to his wish, and chastity defiles.—
 Now comes the husband, and reproves him much ;
 He answers “ Honour's delicate to touch !”
 And straight he pistol in his own hand puts ;
 Gives friend another ; and his man then shoots.
 All this he does to keep up spotless fame :
 So, knave his throat cuts, to shun death of shame !
 A few days pass ; he's look'd on as before ;
 Yet man he kill'd ! and made a woman whore !
 Art does all this—desire for men's applause,
 This bent to evil will in Honour cause ;

For custom's influence, in the world so strong,
 As right disguising what is truly wrong,
 The fear of shame, with terrifying mien,
 To evil urges tho' the good be seen ;
 Impelling onwards, in a wayward style,
 To view vice virtue, honesty as wile.

6. In Honour's path, this crookedness we trace
 As the ideas in the mind find place :
 Some tempers (heated with distemper'd flame !)
 Their Honour resting on a worldly fame,
 More than self-worth, (whate'er the world decrees
 Be't right or wrong !) will act this bent to please.
 Others we see (with difference of thought,
 Where judgment's sounder meditation's brought !)
 Feed Honour's measure by a self-applause,
 And rule its dictates by the moral laws ;
 Which fast retaining ever in their view,
 Their world consists in but a worthy few,
 Whose prudence leads them to explore the tract
 Of self-conviction—the best way to act !

7. Like gold is Honour, a high rated coin !—
 From its first state within the rocky mine,
 Observe the processes gold undergoes,
 And mark the course of Honour as it flows.

When first obtain'd from the deep day-skreen'd mines
 (Before its metal currency obtains)
 The fiery action purges, and refines
 The drossy particles gold's ore combines.

'Tis then constructed (in what form you chuse !)
 And stamp'd as current ; this we all must use,
 Altho' alloy from purity withdraws
 Its native value : while establish'd laws
 Induce the mind to fancy it aright,
 All trash is gold that glitters in the sight !
 So Honour's fritter'd from its first state far,
 As Gold when sever'd from the ingot's bar :
 Induc'd thro' custom, like the gold, men melt
 The sense of Honour, till a polish felt
 Displays the feeling with an outside fair,
 Smooth, brilliant too, yet tarnishing in wear.
 As Gold is given for a general good,
 To purchase clothing, and procure our food ;
 In man was Honour plac'd by Nature's gift,
 To guide the action into proper drift ;
 Yet Gold, tho' given for this noble use,
 May, if perverted, lead unto abuse ;
 So also Honour, guided by the times,
 Tho' meant for good, may feed the source of crimes.

8. Thus Honour resting on a turn of thought,
 So many minds so many shapes are got :
 The social cast in which a man is thrown,
 May chalk a plan for Honour of its own ;
 Whose false impulsion, carrying astray,
 Leads from the beaten to another way,
 More to the taste than that in common trode :
 Excepting points where Honour stakes its road

By one consent, from whence is no appeal,
 This fact, as truth, we safely may reveal ;
 Each mind for honour builds a diff'rent frame :
 What I think honour, might not you think shame ?
 One proof alone can put it to the test :
 He shows most honour who does what is best !
 Without a substance can a shadow be ?
 On Virtue thus attendant, Honour see !
 In every mortal, thro' Creation's whole,
 True Honour's seat is in an upright soul !
 For tho' (like wind which lifts the rolling tide
 Above the level where calm waters glide ;
 And while it lasts, with its resistless sweep,
 Bears all before it on the troubled deep :)
 Oft force of Art, within the human mind,
 Drifts men's opinions, with an impulse blind ;
 Yet (as the sea its level will resume
 When the hush'd winds no longer fret and fume :)
 From Nature limits Vice and Virtue get,
 Which Art, invading, cannot overset.

9. Art good does oft, as often it does ill ;
 Yet Nature keeps the curb upon it still.
 Ask you for proof? see how at birth display'd,
 The seeds of temper in the mind are laid.
 Their sev'ral figures, in their growth and rise,
 Dispose to virtue, or incline to vice ;
 As various passions diff'rently unite,
 To curb the conduct, or impel its flight.

Pace o'er the circuit of a yard well-strew'd
 With various planks of many sorts of wood ;
 Some yield with ease unto the joiner's plane,
 And form once given easily retain ;
 While some we see unto the chisel brought,
 Tho' hard to fashion, durable when wrought ;
 On other's grain all labour is mispent,
 For strongest tools its substance will indent :
 So tempers seem compos'd of diff'rent stuff ;
 Some soft and pliant, others hard and tough ;—
 Or cheerful, dull, good humour'd, or reverse,
 Or churlish, gen'rous, docile, or perverse,
 In endless tints, diversify its forms,
 Shewing what Nature in the mind performs.

10. Yet many causes on the temper act
 T' enlarge, amend, or to constrain its tract.
 So, rivers sprung from a small fountain's space,
 Expand in channel, as they run their race,
 From fresh supplies which other waters throw ;
 Or lessen'd, dwindle when their currents flow
 Where massive rocks impede their native force,
 Obtruding barriers to obstruct the course ;
 As customs, habits, and effects of art,
 To temper's bias varied turns impart,
 As years increase, and commerce with our kind
 Gives more enlargement to the powers of mind.

See how the hand of Education draws
 To Temper's mansion regulating laws ;

Mark views of interest, of power, or gain,
 Impede its progress with a curbing rein :
 Opinions, sentiments, (as minds unite
 Associations, wrongfully or right,
 From daily practice in the worldly way ;)
 Possess a potent and directing sway
 To cause a Temper's artificial rise,
 Oppos'd in course to where the nat'ral lies.
 For instance—see good breeding (as it goes
 In first-rate quality, or belles, or beaux ;)
 Enforce the temper into diff'rent tract
 Than Nature prompts in common life to act :—
 We meet in conduct men severe, and nice,
 Who, freed from interest, descend to vice.
 Behold a hypocrite distort his face
 To ape the semblance of religious grace,
 When, for his gain, (what way I care not !) bent,
 He sues a patron, who is quite a saint ;
 He kneels, prays, sighs, at morning, mid-day, night,
 To gain more favour in this person's sight :
 He gets his point, and leaves his patron ; then
 He swears, drinks, games, with vilest of vile men.—
 How often Tempers (in appearance good)
 In private life tyrannical and rude,
 Appear in public friendly, fond, and civil ;
 Beheld as angels, tho', in fact, the devil !—
 What, tho' a man has for opinion given,
 That hasty Temper is a curse from heaven ?
 What, tho' in company his word's thus past ;
 “ When I lose patience be that day my last !

“ To keep good temper never have I fail’d,
 “ Tho’ on all hands by injuries assail’d ?”—
 Next instant see him where he’s not in awe ;
 He’d hang and shoot you, but for fear of law :
 He stamps and foams ; and, for mere trifle, hot,
 His tongue sends oaths out, as a cannon shot !

11. What’s seen in childhood (in the common run)
 May be restrain’d, but rarely be undone.
 Who’s rogue at six, or generous at eight,
 At heart’s the same, in every age or state,
 With an increas’d or a diminish’d store.
 Yet Art does much, tho’ Nature will do more !

12. To Nature’s mansion then let Art be brought :
 Be you morose, or passionately hot,
 In aught inclin’d to any hurtful vice,
 Learn, thro’ self-knowledge, where the error lies ;
 Then habits shun which nourish vice’s fire
 With deaden’d pleasure, but increas’d desire ;
 Give social conduct room for ample play ;
 Expose its beauty to the open day ;
 Conduct your actions upon Virtue’s rule ;
 And fly for succour to Religion’s school :
 Thus, thro’ habitual energy, attain
 To kill the vice ; or, at the least, restrain
 The glow of temper, and the fire of mind ;
 Allotting space with limits more confin’d.—
 Thus, in a bark, surrounded by the wave,
 By art, themselves from peril sailors save ;

They spread all canvass to the air in breeze,
 To waft them quickly thro' the azure seas :
 When, from the deck, they see a drifting gale,
 With haste, aloft they climb to take in sail ;
 And when rough storm attacks the briny froth,
 They strip the mast, completely, of its cloth.
 So they, in safety, live upon the sea,
 Adapting measures to the times that be ;
 And so mankind their Temper's sail should trim,
 As goes the mind, with reason, or with whim.

Art (like manure, wherein the weed and fruit
 Sustain'd alike, with equal vigour shoot,)
 Both good and evil forces where 'tis thrown ;
 The crop depending on the seed that's sown.

EPISTLE III.

ARGUMENT.

1. On Vanity. 2. On Conceit. 3. On Affectation. 4. On Caprice. 5. On Dislikes. 6. On Peevishness. 7. The different kinds of conduct met with in society deducible from the different manner in which people associate Ideas. 8. The foregoing assertion illustrated. 9. Improper Associations shewn to possess great influence over the conduct. 10. Various striking and familiar examples to prove this. 11. Honour and Shame greatly influenced by Association of Ideas. 12. How ridiculously men in general act to obtain notoriety. 13. The follies and glaring absurdities of Fashion and Fashionable Men descanted on. 14. Picture of the life of a Fashionable Couple. 15. The fashionable part of the community less happy than the unfashionable; and why it is so; shown by a contrast of the two situations. 16. That Reason is of no use to Man when under the influence of improper Associations. 17. The power that such Associations possess to pervert Men's Opinions. 18. How necessary it is to regulate carefully the train of Ideas.
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1. SOME strange affections in men meet our eyes,
By art led wholly to their fall and rise.
An instance take—it is not rare to hear,
“Vain this man is; that, proud beyond compare!”
Between those men what diff'rence do you see;
Say, pride's in you, and vanity's in me?
'Tis this distinction sets the two apart;
Pride comes from Instinct! Vanity is Art!”—

Pride's lofty passion thus may be defin'd ;
 A sturdy rock, the native of the mind,
 Where self-esteem and its retinue dwell,
 Intrench'd and guarded, as in citadel.
 Vain mind (like feathers, which the winds rebuff
 East, west, north, south, according to the puff!)
 In texture flimsy, ever's on the watch
 Notice from others in its course to catch ;
 And, as the eyes of observation shift,
 'Twill change each hour ten thousand times its drift.
 Vain minds proud may be ; proud need not be vain ;
 What one approves the other may disdain ;
 For one's disgusted by what one's inspir'd.—
 Pride's what we all have ! vanity's acquir'd !

2. Of Art's affections let us trace the train.—

Conceit inseparable we find from vain ;
 This comes to view so soon as that begins,
 Brought by one parent to the world, as twins.
 The self-conceited, like the vain, are weak ;
 Endowments boasting they have yet to seek ;
 These minds, like bubbles floating in the air,
 Have more distension than their strength can bear ;
 And, like the parrots, or loquacious pies,
 But little gifted shew where little lies.

3. From the same source will speedily ensue

The motley shades of Affectation's hue :
 The jay adorned with gaudy peacock's plumes,
 Figures the mind which the false form assumes ;

Held up to view, when stripp'd of borrow'd pride,
 It stands a laughing-stock which all deride.
 The skiffs o'erloaded with a pond'rous sail,
 Sink not more quickly in the drifting gale,
 Than the minds seen in Affectation's sea,
 Are lost, from bearing too much vanity.

4. On Art depends (as tenant on a lease !)
 Wav'ring affection of the mind, Caprice.
 Regard the clouds, when driving on the wind,
 A lion, fox, or elephant, we find
 Figur'd, as well as tho' in earnest seen :
 So will Caprice, with its unsteady mien,
 Turn our ideas, as the wind a vane ;
 Make black look white, and white look black again.

5. From this caprice proceed the mind's dislikes
 To things or people ; as the fancy strikes.
 Their rise and fall (like currents in the air ;
 Which drive, as winds by chance impel their sphere !)
 Are caus'd by minds, when in a squeamish mood,
 Sustain'd by whim instead of solid food.
 They seem a picture, where mankind display
 The want of reason in the conduct's sway.

6. As rivers fishes from their waters send,
 On mind's caprice see peevishness depend.
 A peevish mind is like a rotten root,
 Refusing nourishment, to ripen fruit,

In midst of others fruitful in display,
Whose crops are ripen'd by a sim'lar clay.

7. For gen'ral, now particular cases leave ;
Trace Art's effects, and then it's power believe.
Look from a window, on a crowded street
Where many pass, and all descriptions meet ;
There will society its views disclose—
See fools brush past before a wise man's nose :
A saint and sinner elbow as they go :
And crowds make way, for clown, lord, belle, or beau.
Here view a mob which Punch collects about ;
Punch beats his wife ; then comes the devil out :
Now some their sides hold ; some, unmov'd, look gruff ;
Those roaring "bravo," while these bellow "stuff."
There, lo ! glad hundreds, to some frolic come,
Dance to the sound of castanet or drum :
From this glad group see many turn away,
Saying, "'tis impious ! I'll to church and pray."—
In ball-room's mirth, what husband e'er sees faults
In wife by man squeez'd in a German Waltz ?
But should he elsewhere the like freedom see,
He'd shoot, or stab, the man in jealousy !—
At Game of Forfeits, lo ! the chastest miss
May, with impunity, receive a kiss :
But kissing heard in any corner sly
Is quite enough to dubb a girl "O Fie !"—
Behold a rich man open house for mirth :
His hall is throng'd—tho' the worst man on earth !

And should the wretch give any toast profane,
 All drink, applaud ; drink, and applaud again.
 See thousand coaches from all quarters pour,
 To fill the ball-room of some noted whore ;
 While she (who virtue ruins by her wile)
 Receives proud peers, and peeresses, in file.
 Mark men discussing, which the fittest road,
 The walks of Fashion, or the ways of God !
 What nature most intended for our weal ;
 A solid head-piece, or a supple heel !
 If sense should have it ; or dress win the day.—
 How comes this strange diversified display ?

The motley views Society displays,
 To th' Associations of Ideas
 Which men's minds nourish, in a great degree
 Owe their formation, and consistency.

8. For proof—observe its energetic hand
 Produce the basis where professions stand.
 Some (joining sword and honour in their thought,
 And thinking dignity a gorget's knot :)
 Set forward, eager for the rest of life,
 To bleed or conquer in the field of strife.
 While this man dauntless, 'spite of perils told,
 Braves the rough ocean ; like a lion, bold ;
 These take to study, those unto the bar ;
 While some court monarchs, for a robe, or star,
 Others incline to bear a nation's weight,
 And swell their style with “ Minister of State.”

With wealthy traffic if Ideas range,
 The summum bonum is in Lloyd's, or 'Change :
 And some for commerce no affection know :
 What's one mind's pleasure makes another's woe !
 All men's ideas diff'rently are blown ;
 And each sails best when guided by his own :
 For woe waits all who, in their own despatch,
 Against the current of ideas fight.
 So ships which steer against the tide and breeze,
 Depriv'd of vigour, dully plough the seas ;
 While those whose sails the steady trade-wind feel,
 Make the waves hiss beneath the rapid keel.

9. All men are prone by nature, to unite
 Associations in idea's flight.
 And bless'd are they, who, as ideas join,
 Can make their classes orderly combine.
 For strange disorder, often, as they float,
 Connects ideas perfectly remote ;
 And, if not check'd by Reason's ruling curbs,
 The strange conjunction wisest minds disturbs.

When the ideas in this careless state,
 In the mind's mansion can associate ;
 With fellow-feeling, in a friendly band,
 (However distant they were meant to stand !)
 Knit every day in more endearing twines,
 Without the one the other's vigour pines ;
 Until by custom join'd so fast, at length,
 To part them Reason's impotent in strength.

10. Oft, Education, with pernicious care,
 Fosters, alas ! what it should most impair :
 And habits too, Association's rear :
 With children, nurtur'd in a foolish fear,
 That darkness wakes the grizzly spectre's host,
 Talk but of darkness, and they see a ghost.
 Yet ghost and darkness surely have no kin !
 Behold, thro' chance, if bee, or hornet, sting,
 While plucking roses, or the lily's flower,
 The child, (recalling that unlucky hour)
 When rose, or lily, is observed in sight,
 Thinking of stings, is stupified with fright.

Not only children—in the riper mind
 As strange ideas often are conjoin'd
 From force of habit ; coming in routine ;
 The one appearing, when the other's seen ;
 Confusing thought, with double-vision'd sight,
 As one idea brings the other's light.

Place two stout men within a woman's gaze ;
 Clothe one in blue ; and one in scarlet's blaze ;
 'Tis ten to one, upon the first caught view,
 She'll like the red, tho' better stand in blue.
 How comes this choice ? 'tis mighty strange, in troth :
 Yet Honour chuses scarlet for its cloth !

Some bards (and bards above the common run !)
 Compose according as is mist or sun.
 Gaily they sing, or stupidly rehearse,
 The weather chusing for the helm of verse.

Trace men of method : (differing in cast :)
 As the clock strikes, so one will eat and fast :

Hold this hour lucky, and conceit this evil.
Four will digest!!—to eat at five's the devil!!

Mark a poor wretch in choler's frenzy trac'd :
How comes his passion? 'tis a chair misplac'd!
One inch derang'd; put here instead of there.
Kill him at once, but never move his chair!

Look at a fellow fair, and fat in paunch,
Whose hunger three good pounds of meat scarce staunch.
Observe him suddenly convuls'd at heart :
At sight of grease (a scruple's fiftieth part!)
Which soils the napkin, he rejects his food,
And swears, "By G—d," in a distemper'd mood.

These are a few; not half the follies shewn :
Some hold white lucky, and unlucky brown;
And some poor souls have horrors for the day,
If bed were quitted in unusual way.

When thus ideas, ill conducted, blend,
The greatest comforts to distress may tend;
And, thought conducted totally amiss,
The merest trifles cause the chiefest bliss.

11. As man's own humour, so, a country's laws,
Associations of ideas cause;
Whence, things, tho' trivial in intrinsic state,
Are view'd of mighty magnitude and weight :
Thus, the white ermin, or brocaded lace,
If made a badge of honourable trace,
Or, of pre-eminence, (whatever kind!)
Is keenly sought for by the strongest mind;

And a whole nation's energy may press
To catch at honour in a suit of dress.

So will our senses terrified, avoid
Most harmless things, where infamies reside ;
Or any lowness is conceiv'd to hang,
Stamp'd with a brand-mark from the voice of man.
Who would incline, with worldly splendour big,
To work a shoe, or fabricate a wig ?
Would he not shrink, lest shopman's apron, tied
Around his body, should defile his pride ?
And few (tho' crimeless !) in a crowded street,
Thro' the stock's holes would introduce their feet.
They bring not crimes ; but yet the mind is led
To view the stocks, as if in fact they did.

12. In common life how many men are seen,
(When the ideas in this way convene)
To quit all comforts, both of purse and health,
To ape a lordling, or a spark of wealth ;
And drink and game (tho' not perhaps their wish !)
To gain the style of dignified, or rich ;
Or squander money (howsoever poor !)
To keep a horse, or to maintain a whore.

Strange—strange indeed—the things we daily see
Done for the sake of notoriety.
To reach to fame what name too mean appears ?
Some to be talk'd of would wear ass's ears !
And some (a few hours' notice to produce)
Would send themselves and fortunes to the deuce !

For one who notice gains thro' wisdom, ten
 Thro' folly come to be the talk of men.
 I'd rather live (as now) unknown to fame,
 Than fam'd as——such men cruel 'twere to name!
 But pride I'd feel (who would not?) to be known
 As Whitbread, Nelson, Scott, or Wellington.

13. Men are who, blest, pine that relentless fate
 Prevents advancement to some envied state,
 Where mix ideas, in a jumbled flight,
 With something view'd in honourable light:
 Or stamp'd by Fashion with the name "genteel."
 What matter whether in the head or heel?
 Fashions not nice!—it whimsically veers
 From legs to fingers; and from thence to ears;
 To day in buckles; and to-morrow pins;
 One hour in virtues; and the next in sins;
 It beauty ugly turns, and ugly fair,
 In man, or woman, garment, horse, or chair.
 A nat'ral hump-back we call cause of woe:
 Yet humps by dress made, Fashion calls "the go!"
 At wens on necks the passers by all stare:
 But bolster'd neckloth is becoming wear!
 A menial man, equip'd with liv'ry suit,
 (Or coachman, footman,) we regard as "brute;"
 Whose touch so stains a gentleman, or peer,
 That Thames's waters cannot wash it clear.
 But who that sees, in Mall, in Park, or Room,
 Sir Tandem Jockey, and Lord Would-be groom,

As coachmen habited from head to heel,
 Would least reluctance, or least shyness feel
 Their hands to seize, and with Stentorian voice,
 Bawl "How now, friends? companions of my choice!"—
 Now how comes this? for who, in God's name, knows
 A peer from coachman, dress'd in the same clothes?
 And when their tongues roar out "GEE UP" and "WOO,"
 He's wise whose eyes distinguish 'tween the two!
 Altho' not rich, ten pounds I'd bet to one,
 That few point out the Master from the John:
 And if aright to point them out they fail,
 What mark makes lords? what, drivers of a mail?
 "Hold—hold,"—cries one,—“I come to prove by rules,
 Peers are not grooms; tho' Poets may be fools.”—
 P. "With all my heart—now to the proof proceed."—
 A. "Is custom potent in the world?"—P. "Agreed."—
 A. "Then, custom says, no great no rich man shocks,
 Four blood tits driving on a mail coach box.
 Zounds! fashion never makes it a reproach,
 Tho' garter'd peers drive footmen in their coach.
 More low those driv'n, more refin'd it looks!
 The boxer Crib or swarthy Molineux,
 In peer's barouche, would make more eyes look on,
 Than, in like case, illustrious Wellington."—
 P. "Stay—pray sir, tell me, might Sweep, black with soot,
 Sit on the throne, and George place at his foot?"
 A. "O, dunce! O, blockhead!"—P. "I corrected stand."
 A. "D—'d lout! henceforth, know, that the Four-in-Hand
 Possess this privilege, to place, at will,
 In coaches servants, yet be masters still."—

P. "And are they privileg'd to swear, sir, too?"—

A. "O, yes! 'tis bobbish to say G—d d——n you!

"It gives a zest, ineffable, to speech."—

P. "It may—ineffably beyond my reach!

"I cry you grace—such words my humble sense,

"No better knowing, fancied impudence."—

A. "This proves my doctrine; that poetic men,

"In life are fools, tho' clever with their pen."

P. "For this fine compliment, retort take brief;

"The first to steal are first to holla thief!

"And (lest the bearing on your wit be lost)

"The greatest fools descant on folly most!"—

A. "I take in good part what you say in ill."

P. "Yet truths sharp arrow rankles in you still."

A. "'Tis false—but now to end as I began,

"I say behaviour, not dress, makes the man."

P. "So I say too—and by this test we will

"This fam'd club sift, next muster at Salthill."

What's too absurd if fashion say 'tis fine?

Then prayers are monstrous; oaths esteem'd divine;

Then ranks are jumbled; and exchange position

As much as—more than—in a revolution.

Then spurn'd is honest man: admir'd the rogue:

Chaste matron's slighted: courtesan's in vogue.

Then wisdom foolish is: and folly wise;

The mind then longs for things it should despise;

Each wish obtain'd, ideas are not free!

Once set them wrong and wrong they'll ever be,

In chase of something—what imports it where?

To say no worse, a life of fashion's care!

14. To prove this true, view Lovemode's daily life,
 (A pink of fashion!) with Madame his wife.
 On him attendant twenty footmen stand :
 On her a score of handmaids on each hand :
 For her caprice, we ready furnish'd see
 A chariot, coach, barouche, and vis à vis :
 A tandem, buggy, curricie, for him,
 (With hounds and steeds) anticipate each whim :
 With them, God knows, all luxuries are found,
 That grow beneath, or flourish above ground :
 And men their mansion as a proverb hold,
 For glare of mirrors, and the blaze of gold.—
 Can aught be wanting in this vast array,
 To make nights tranquil, and well come the day ?
 'Tis strange indeed (and yet 'tis true) we find
 One grand essential wanting—peace of mind !
 Perhaps, to day, Madame while taking air
 May meet a lady than herself more fair ;
 Whose lovely form, and equipage quite new,
 Making monopoly of every view,
 Leave her not thought of—what a shocking thing !
 On this with force she pulls her coachman's string.
 “ John—drive me home—I'm sick—O, horrid sight !”—
 She weeps and faints thro' jealousy and spite.
 Arriv'd at home, what comfort finds she there ?
 The new launch'd equipage and lady fair,
 A thousand vexing images present.
 Now on her maids she goes her wrath to vent ;
 Now for her coachman in a phrenzy knocks ;
 Now curses fate, and now her rouging box :

Then tells her husband, with desponding tone,
 " My plight is lamentable ! my comfort's gone !
 " Less wealthy women better look than I !
 " O, leave this town and to the country fly."
 Alas ! poor man ! not happier than his wife,
 Can he assuage the torments of her life ?
 For he (laugh not—such fools are often seen !)
 Last night was plung'd into a fit of spleen,
 Because his neighbour Gourmand, at a route,
 With pease (in April !) set his supper out ;
 And also cheer'd his visitors, in part,
 With peaches, grapes, and strawberry dessert.
 Next day the journals, in their columns, state
 'Twas the first time that season they'd been ate.
 The news, like lightning, spreads thro' all the town.
 Poor Lovemode thought to 've made this boast his own !

15. For sake of contrast to this modish life,
 In middling sphere seek out a man and wife ;
 From morn till night their sev'ral actions trace :
 In Grocer's, Fishmonger's, or Crispin's race !—
 " What, poet ! what !" loud roars a voice, " O, fie !
 " You're a republican : by heaven on high,
 " You turn society quite upside down,
 " When such comparisons you give the town."
 P. " 'Tis hard, when seated, verses to arrange,
 " That fool comes thus my notions to derange."
 L. " Fool ! fool, indeed ! low scribbler, how now !"
 P. " Is't not your name ? then pray, sir, who art thou

L. "A titled man—a lord,"—*P.* "Why come you here?"

L. "How dare you liken fishmonger to peer?"

"Compare not reptiles, with their aprons on,

"To Fashion's household—of which I am one!"—

P. "My lord, I'd grieve to see a man so vain,

"Did I not know that fashion turns the brain."

L. "Quite false."—*P.* "Then, state what your pretensions
"are :

"And I'll compare you with a fishmonger.

"For now, my lord, I do not hold the pen

"To write on titles, but to talk of men."

L. "I have a wife."—*P.* "So he has too, I hear"—

L. "An heiress mine, with thousands ten a year."—

P. "And his, my lord, I swear by the Grand Turk,

"Is heiress too, for she helps him to work!"

L. "Now, Mr. Poet, (all points to lay bare)

"As well as wife, I keep a mistress fair."—

P. "Than you much more he character reveres :

"If girl he keep, it reacheth not men's ears."

L. "In liv'ry servants twenty I have got."—

P. "He serves himself; and thus he needs them not."

L. "I eat on gold."—*P.* "The fishmonger on delf."

L. "Me wealth my land brings."—*P.* "So fish bring him
"pelf"

L. "I have a coach; and" *P.* "Pray, be not so pert;

"If you have coach the fishmonger has cart."

L. "I've run you down—this last is poor come off."—

P. "Hold—solve me questions now, before you scoff.

"And take my word that (true is what I say)

"Than you this man's more happy thro' the day—"

"Does not your wife, my lady, often scold,

"And ask you what you'd been without her gold?"—

L. "In earnest sometimes, but more oft in fun."

P. "The fishman hears not this—his wife brought none!

"Here then he's happier."—*L.* "Said I not 'twas joke?"—

P. "Let's give the business now the ending stroke—

"My lord, inform me if this coach of yours

"The lust of rivalling your neighbour cures?

"Feel you not grief, when lolling in't you lie,

"To see a flashier equipage pass by?"—

L. "O, all feel this"—*P.* "Your pardon, if your please;

"My fishman feels it not—he sits at ease."—

L. "Where?"—*P.* "In his coach"—*L.* "You said, he

"had but cart."—

P. "Than your coach better, for it glads his heart!"

L. "How: amidst fish?"—*P.* "On Sunday it is clean."—

L. "My coach on week-days in neat state is seen!"—

P. "And yet his cart is better."—*L.* "In what sense?"—

P. "It brings him gear: your coach, in week, expense!

"And then on Sunday, in this clean'd cart, he

"Rides independent with his family;

"His trade supplying what he has—but you,

"Assail'd by debt, must borrow from a Jew;

"For wife on one hand; and for whore on t' other;

"Maintaining splendour in the midst of pother!

"Thro' week engaged in the concerns of trade

"To keep himself and family in bread,

"A Sunday's airing gladdeneth his face;

"To you such airing is but common place!

" His wife says, (riding) " neighbours two I spy :
 " They ride in gigs."—He answers, " What care I?—
 " I'm pleas'd to see they're able to maintain
 " Such pretty chaises with the cash they gain."
 " Now you, my Lord, (forgive me for the oath !)
 " Should neighbours rival you, would d——n them both.
 " What tho' at alehouse, on the road, mayhap
 " They dine on cheese, and drink fresh beer from tap ?
 " Still come they home, at night, with heart content ;
 " Next week to gain more cash for that now spent !
 " But you, who tipple soda, wine, and spruce,
 " Abroad uneasy, home wish at the deuce,
 " Because, for ever, with disorder'd mind,
 " You long for something that you cannot find.——
 " And now, my Lord, (with you and fishman done !)
 " Say, which has gain'd by the comparison ?"

The greatest trifles in the world we see
 To fashion bring disgust, and ennui ;
 And make its vot'ries, whom all comforts bless,
 Not half so happy as those having less ;
 But who, with wisdom managing desire,
 Beyond their station wish not to aspire,
 Nor sigh because they see another higher.

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16. Content to mind will vainly seek access
 When the ideas in confusion press,
 Without a rider to conduct a rein
 To shape their courses, and their speed restrain :
 For reason ever stands in little stead
 When the ideas in this manner speed :

If once they twist in an improper twine,
 This gift becomes a jewel cast to swine !
 Then, man is witty, stupid, noble, mean,
 As a coat's cloth in quality is seen !
 And what to-day we in no manner prize
 May take to-morrow value in our eyes ;
 However silly, or however low :—
 Look in the streets the full extent to know.

17. When men opinions thro' this channel lead,
 New modell'd wholly, as their courses speed,
 What's downright evil, thro' this medium view'd,
 Tho' evil still, is look'd upon as good.
 What mighty diff'rence, in a gamester's course,
 Who cheats another of his purse, or horse ;
 And his who robs upon the highway's heath ?
 Yet one has honour ; tho' the other's thief !—
 See how the world has pav'd a sep'rate way
 For men who murder, and in duel slay.
 What's the distinction ? argue as you can ;
 Are both not guilty of the blood of man ?
 Committed murder leads unto the block,
 The wheel's fierce torture, or the knout's sharp shock ;
 While they are seen who have another fell'd
 In duel's conflict, by their neighbours held
 As men of spirit, in their feelings nice :
 Forsooth, 'tis honour varnishes the vice !

All human actions (be they good, bad, strange,)
 May stand perverted as ideas range ;

In one way blended, in the balance plac'd,
 They view the conduct dignified, and chaste;
 But, should the links of the connection break,
 Then, form of evil the same deed may take;
 Or, vice versa, evil's aspect wear
 The mask of dignity, and virtue fair.

Behold rich Helluo : all he does is good :
 Yet his life's vicious ! and his conduct's rude !
 Behold poor Pauper : butt for scorn, and mirth,
 Tho' virtuous ever from his day of birth !—
 Make Pauper rich ; and Helluo place forlorn :
 Prais'd is rich Pauper ! Helluo poor meets scorn !—
 Is it not vile ? yet, daily, we behold
 Men's morals look'd on as their purse has gold :
 And what in me the world calls vice's pitch,
 In you is no sin—if you're great, and rich !

18. Thus, as ideas from the mind are sped,
 By reason marshall'd, or by folly led,
 We see that all the faculties of soul
 Proceed to right, or haste to evil's goal.
 Mankind should therefore their endeavours strain
 To keep ideas in a proper train ;
 For who is fit when they in courses stray,
 To guide himself, or mark another's way ?
 The human mind will shortly reconcile
 The worst of vices (be they e'er so vile !)
 To conscience smother'd in a lawless thought
 Where the ideas in confusion float ;

And reason, banish'd by their ruthless gang,
Graves this memento, in the mind to hang :—
“ Think ere you act : think, and revolve again :
“ To act at random's not to act like men !
“ Nor e'er a refuge to opinion give
“ Till sifted finely thro' sound judgment's sieve.”

EPISTLE IV.

ARGUMENT.

1. Men shewn to differ in intellectual capacity.
 2. Men compared with respect to talent.
 3. What kind of talent most common in the world.
 4. Necessary to find out our particular talent, and improper to attempt to soar beyond it.
 5. The difference in men's understandings attempted to be accounted for.
 6. What the difference in the male and female capacity is to be attributed to; and the female mind shewn to be equally sensible, and alike capable of intellectual efforts, as the male.
 7. How ridiculous and unjust it is to decry accomplishments in women.
 8. Contrast of a witty with an unwitty woman.
 9. Why the female mind should be improved.
 10. Different kinds of judgment.
 11. Judgment the source of opinion.
 12. Folly of using argument to convince others that their opinions are wrong.
 13. Argument of this kind shewn to inflame ill will.
 14. Friendships often destroyed from this cause.
 15. All men jealous of mental accomplishments in others, and proud of them in themselves.
 16. The influence of education on the mind.
 17. Cursory remarks on education.
 18. What sort of sense is common to all men.
 19. The abuse of common sense the cause of folly real and apparent.
 20. What constitutes folly.
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NOTE. The words *Sense* and *Wit* in the following Epistle are used indiscriminately in their popular signification of *understanding*, and not with any reference to their strict philosophical acceptation.

1. ON health or bus'ness, walking up and down
The bustling streets of any crowded town;
Or bent on pleasure, as crowds pass along,
We chuse a station to observe the throng;

Who ever saw men (whether poor or rich)
 When past, repass, not knowing which was which ;
 Led, by resemblance, to confound their names ;
 James thinking John ; and John miscalling James ?
 No two are like in figure, face, or air ;
 All diff'ring, (just as flowers in a parterre :)
 A man once seen, amidst a crowd is known ;
 As amidst tulips is a rose full blown.

In mind we see, as well as in the face,
 A diff'rence stamp'd, by nature, on our race.
 Procure a seat where senators are met,
 New laws to settle, and on old debate :
 Or where a judge, on law's imposing throne,
 Hears counsels state their reasons, pro and con :
 Or where a priest, in holy garb array'd,
 Tells Heaven's great goodness unto man display'd :
 Or mark domestic incidents which pass ;
 When men discuss opinions o'er a glass :
 Or in a company, hold forth, to folk,
 On points abstruse, or things to raise a joke :
 Or any way (what matters how, or when ?)
 Attract the notice of assembled men :—
 There, you will see how understandings rise
 In fix'd gradations, from the dull to wise.
 Some men, in words as in their actions sage,
 Improving others, ornament the age ;
 And when they speak noise ceases, far and nigh ;
 As calm seas hush when oars no longer ply.
 While others talking (on what points you chuse !)
 Are quizz'd as fools ; by Gentiles as by Jews ;

Each word they say evincing, more and more,
Inherent folly, clearer than before.

2. Mark, how the fruits of intellect in man
Their produce vary with the minds which plan.
One works materials, which a structure raise
With fine proportions, challenging our praise :
Another labours the same quarry's vein ;
But tools defective make his work in vain !
He brings ingredients, and designs their place ;
But mar'd at first, how can they fit with grace ?
The first in inside as in out, we find ;
With grand construction harmony combin'd,
Exalt the soul, to see a pleasing pile
Upheld by judgment, not sustain'd by guile :
The longer view'd the more delight we gain ;
It bears inspection o'er and o'er again.
A faulty structure shows us in the next
A botch'd up labour, in its form perplex't ;
Whose total fabric, without shape or taste,
Resembling mazes, or a desert's waste,
First seen disgusts ; again survey'd, dismays :—
What's good alone endures a second gaze !

3. More fools than wise men in the world one sees,
Yet men are wise and foolish in degrees !
In middle way the greater numbers steer ;
From wisdom far ; still not to folly near.—
This road, more crowded than the other two,
Keeps men from notice, less expos'd to view ;

Whereas, in wisdom's or in folly's way,
All those who travel, must their forms display.

4. Our nature proves (and few will disbelieve)
One mind unfit all science to conceive.
Mankind in talents differ in degree :
All Newton read : all Newtons cannot be !
Nor can we all be Horaces, or Popes :
Where lies our strength there too should lie our hopes !
To fix'd profession, then, each man should yoke :
Let lawyers talk of Lyttleton on Coke :
Priests of the Bible : sailors of the sea :
Soldiers of arms : of verses, fools like me.
Fish live in water : men exist on land :
Reverse the picture : so will talents stand
Which dainty palates bring to lothe their food :
They pitch on poison 'stead of fare that's good !
One mind is fit to trace Creation's plan ;
How this is made, and for what end it sprang :
Another (soaring to obtain applause)
Describes the planets, and their stated laws :
The angle's diff'rence, and the circle's size,
His sphere of thought can easily comprise :
The minds less sturdy flimsier wreaths adorn :
One way excelling most of men are born !
First, second, third, by nature meant to sit :
To know our talent is the finest wit !
Who knows it not, instead of blest, is curs'd :
He thrives as second who is lost as first !

5. From Nature rarely, (which is ever wise!)

But man's own conduct, shades in sense arise.

Oft Nature's bounty careless habits blight :

Where thought is trouble, there is knowledge slight !

Tho' good the soil, thro' negligence in care,

(As corn is blemish'd by the filthy tare)

From Nature's seed no harvest's ever got :

The mind thrives best which oftenest is wrought.

6. Take illustration of appropriate kind

From the appearance of the Female mind.—

In weight or measure smaller in degree

(Stor'd in a brain form'd for vacuity)

From Nature's hand do women sense receive ?

Which folly's most, to tell this, or believe ?

The female frame is weaker than the male.

Granted : it is—what then does this avail ?

Does it ensue, as certain consequence,

That weaker texture causes weaker sense ?

'Tis a wrong thought—how often do we find

That frailest body has the stoutest mind.

No ; no ; wise Nature deals to both alike :

So reason's roots, as we direct them, strike !

What makes man rich in intellectual show,

Makes it in woman equally to grow.

In mind alike, they differ but in frame :

The mind of woman is as man's the same !

Not put, like his, to a laborious use,

(From this inaction) 'twill of course produce

A growth less sturdy in the common run :
 Can soil show verdure when by weeds o'errun ?
 So rise the trees within a lawn, or field ;
 Those finely cultur'd ; those remaining wild ;
 Alike produc'd, and plac'd in sim'lar ground,
 Those shoot luxuriant foliage around ;
 While these, less car'd for, less display impart.
 'Tis Nature gives, t' improve is left for Art !

Trace boys and girls in childhood—at a game
 They think, and act, both pretty much the same.
 Hear them recite, decline, or read at schools :
 As many clever, and as many fools,
 In both are found, if carefully we seek ;
 Howe'er employ'd ; in learning French, or Greek !

Push observation to a farther stage :
 When both are seen matur'd in mind by age
 (If fit it be to judge from what we know !)
 A belle is just as sensible as beau.

" False ! false !" one cries, " a libel 'tis on man."
 Stand forward, Duncce—refute it, if you can.
 You speak for man—for woman I—begin ;
 Compare ; and tell me where they differ in.—

D. " You know this line ('twill make your doctrine fall)
 " Most women have no characters at all !"

P. " For this fam'd line I do not care one tittle,
 " Men (view'd in gen'ral) have just as little !"

D. " At dress the judgment of a woman stops."

P. " Soft, if you please, forget you Bond Street fops :
 " What woman's sillier (frankly own the truth)
 " Than one yclept a fashionable youth ?"

D. "Ah! now I'll tell you where a diff'rence shews ;

"A man keeps ledgers."—*P.* "Well : a woman sews !

"Tho' cits say else, my speech to this amounts,

"To sew well's harder than to keep accounts!"

D. You speak of things that you have never seen."—

P. "I once was clerk ; and know the whole routine :

"Accounts once learn'd, a blockhead gains his bread :

"'Tis thus with women in the use of thread!"

D. "Like men of bus'ness can they write a letter?"

P. "The answer's evident—they write it better !

"What woman ever such epistle sent :

"I've got your favour, noticing content :

"You wish me well, and, I wish you the same?—

"It was not thus Sevigné got her fame!"

D. "For state affairs their minds are fitted less."—

P. "Indeed! what King was greater than Queen Bess?"

D. "What woman ever reach'd the classics near?"

P. "Who does not know the Homer of Dacier?"—

D. "No female critics."—*P.* "Here, you're quite wrong too:

"Critiques were written by fam'd Montague."

D. "By women sermons never written were?"—

P. "Let Bowdler's name convince you that you err!"

D. "Men can write odes to gratify our ears."—

P. "Are there not shoals of female sonnetteers?"

D. "Name all the dramatists who grace the stage?"—

P. "Few equal Baillie, in the present age!"

D. "Who treads the scene like Kemble?—women few!—

P. "The Kemble's great: so is the Siddons too!"

D. "Ah! but the novellists."—*P.* "Madly you run on!

"Who writes a novel like fair Owenson?"

“ Or, who for mind more pleasures can procure
 “ Than Edgeworth, Hamilton, or Hannah Moore?”

D. “ You’re brib’d by woman the male race to sink.”—

P. “ Not I—I speak exactly as I think—

“ I’ve said all this on fools (like you) t’impress

“ That women sense with men alike possess.”

Then Nature’s bounty in the lovely fair
 Is lost in culture, thro’ a want of care.
 Not us’d to think their understandings wane :
 Lace, baubles, dresses, are a woman’s bane !
 While men (manuring) give the mental soil
 Increase of verdure, thro’ assiduous toil :
 Women, alas ! in fashion’s mirror seen,
 Are but employ’d about the outward mien ;
 A ribbon, clasp, gay head-dress, shoe, we find
 Supplant fit cultivation of the mind ;
 And, like good land which husbandman ne’er heeds,
 Their minds rear folly, as this ground rears weeds.

7. “ I hear, methinks, some silly voices bawl,
 “ A learned woman is the deuce and all !
 “ ’Tis better far to hear a hoarse pig squeak,
 “ Than female tongues which Latin talk, or Greek :
 “ The sound is awful ; like the roaring sea !
 “ They had much better not know A from B.”
 I’ve heard a tale, which (without farther suit)
 I’ll here narrate, this doctrine to confute.—
 A man once liv’d (no matter where, or when !
 In Britain, France, Greece, Portugal, or Spain !)

Who thought, like others, in the prime of life,
 'Twas fit to think of marrying a wife.
 In short, a girl gain'd favour in his sight;
 For beauty famous, but unletter'd quite.
 He married: lov'd: no faults she had to him:
 Love sees no faults! to it faults merits seem!
 A friend invited the new married pair
 To a grand fête—she was the fairest there:
 And while she spoke not (so her beauty shone)
 Eyes she attracted; and all hearts she won.
 At last in converse they beguiled an hour;
 Of Homer spoke; and mention'd Cesar's power.—
 “What! Homer!” says she, “true; he liv'd in Rome:
 “Commanded hosts, and came triumphant home.”
 All stare, and titter, thus to hear her speak.—
 “The Cesar talk'd of, was he not blind Greek
 “Who wrote in verses: like our poets here?
 “A ballad-monger! else a sonneteer!”
 The husband blush'd; he could not hide his pain:
 His wife was lovely, yet he wish'd her plain:
 All his estate how gladly he'd have paid
 Could he have made the mind fair, as the maid.—
 His sons he told to heed this golden rule;
 “Before you wed, make her you love write *Fool*:
 “And as she spells it, so to her act you:
 “Wed if with double *O*; wed not if with *U*!”

8. Behold fair Celia seated at a ball:
 (Her peerless beauty makes the toast of all:)

See her accosted—mark—she shows her breast ;
 Her fine neck stretches, with alluring gest ;
 Plays with her fan, to show her hands and arms :
 Fine women know the value of their charms !—
 “ The ball-room’s crowded ! company genteel !
 “ How sweet the music ! what a sprightly reel !”
 “ That lady’s dress, methinks, has too much show ?”—
 To this fair Celia answers, “ Yes,” or “ no.”
 On this come up Lord Lovemode and Sir Billy :
 They say soft words : she blushes ; and looks silly.—
 All pass and repass, saying, “ ’tis a pity’
 “ So little wit should be in one so pretty :”
 And shrug their shoulders ; swearing, by their souls,
 That witless beauties are like waxen dolls !

Step on a little and Lucilla see
 The life and soul of a society :
 Handsome enough to pass off in a crowd :
 Dress’d well ; yet no way in apparel proud :
 Not too presumptuous : in a middle way,
 Not over modest, nor yet over gay,
 Observe her circled by the company ;
 Pleasing with wit, or playful repartee ;
 While handsome Celia sits almost forlorn,
 ’Spite of her charms, and trappings which adorn ;
 Less fair Lucilla captivates the throng :
 All men exclaiming, as they move along,
 “ A heavenly woman !” voices all declare it—
 Plain looks take beauty in the flow of merit !!

9. O teach the mind, and tend the body less,
 Ye who instruct the females of our race :
 Tell them that charms by understanding grac'd,
 Draw (like two magnets) with a double haste :
 Place this before them, wheresoe'er they sit,
 " Beauty is feeble unsustain'd by wit !"
 Impress for ever on their minds this truth,
 " Wit charms in old age as it does in youth !"
 Improve their minds, if you would have them be
 The finest relish of society :
 Improve their minds, if you'd have them appear
 The source for comfort, and the cure for care :
 Improve their minds—for when instruction's given,
 The charms of Woman are the charms of Heaven !—
 O Woman ! then appear this lovely whole !
 Give yourself scope and energy of soul !
 Be train'd to reason, and right judgment use :—
 This leads me back unto my roving muse.

10. Sound and fantastic judgments rise to sight :
 One points its compass to the way of right :
 And its possessor guides (as bus'ness is)
 To sound conclusions from fix'd premises :
 The other flimsy (like the chaff, which flies
 This way or that, as the wind's impulse lies ;)
 To right or wrong, with heedless hurry, makes,
 As fancy's pinion its direction takes.
 Thro' lazy habit, or default in sense,
 The test of scrutiny such ne'er commence :

Not trusting self, as other people think,
 They rise, when they rise ; vanish, when they sink ;
 And, giving ever superficial glance,
 Like mere machines, as others move, they dance.

11. In judgment's field (whatever their degree)
 Found all opinions of society.
 Party cabals of politics in state,
 From this original their issue date :
 And hence we see the British nation split,
 Concerning merits in Charles Fox and Pitt !
 These ruin view where those imagine strength :
 And who can tell which is in right at length ?—
 With varied notions, as oppos'd in tints,
 Religion's face the judgment's paint imprints :
 Thus all the sects in Christendom arise ;
 In some eyes foolish, and in others wise.
 Hear two priests talk of their respective church :
 " Mine will be blest," says one, " yours left in lurch :"
 And straight retorts the other learn'd divine,
 " Yours is in error ; in the right is mine !"
 No one opinion, in the mind of man,
 Is ever seen to keep to stated plan :
 For each man's mind (according to its tone)
 Has ways to judge, peculiar, of its own :
 What ten assert, ten others will dispute :
 Dispute they may, but rarely will confute :
 These say " we know ;" those straight retort " deny :"
 How to convince ?—I'll tell you—never try !

'Tis loss of breath, and but a useless din :
 The proof of wisdom 's timely to give in :
 Sound reason shows to any mind of sense,
 To be convinc'd is hard as to convince :
 And who can hope from others to receive,
 On like occasion what he would not give ?

12. Deaf ears resemble disputative souls :
 Tough as the bull-dog, hoodwink'd as the moles,
 'Tis waste of strength their sentiments to split :
 What's one man's folly is another's wit !
 Fools will be foolish, preach from March to May :
 What one ear hears, the other lets away :
 Minds more substantial never take to flight :
 What man conceives not his opinions right ?

13. The pettiest jarrings in these points, distil
 Baneful ingredients to excite ill will :
 All minds possessing certain proud conceit,
 Whence pain proceeds when judgment meets defeat.
 For instance—see Dick Testy and his Friend,
 Oppose in argument each other's end.
 At first, quite civil, Testy says, “ D'ye see,
 “ That your position's faulty a priori ?”
 “ No,” says the other, “ 'tis as clear as light.”
 T. “ 'Tis false : you view it with a jaundic'd sight.”
 F. “ Zounds ! and the devil ! have you common sense.”
 Testy takes passion—T. “ Get you, sir, from hence :
 “ That is not speech for gentleman to use.”
 F. “ Testy, I've right to say whate'er I chuse !

"Nay, more, I will say't."—*T.* "That you shall not here."

F. "What! would you make me yield the point thro' fear?"

"Remember wise in speech are shy and cool:

"But fool knows all things save that he is fool!"

T. "This trait of malice awkwardly is thrown:

"You measure my faults judging by your own."

F. "My reas'ning's right: and, Dick, you can't deny it."

T. "I flatly do."—*F.* "Then you're a dunce."—*T.* "Unsay it."

F. "That for your threats"—(and snap his finger goes!)

On this Dick Testy pulls him by the nose!

For men as well bear villain's name, at once,

As the foul stigma from the brand of dunce.

14. With kin or comrade, sail on friendship's sea,

And in opinion warmly disagree;

The bark of social intimacy drifts,

(The helm forsaken) and on hatred rifts.

So falls the ship which strikes on pointed rock;

Its timbers parted by the dreadful shock,

The weary ocean, with rebelling wave,

Asserts pre-eminence, no longer slave:

Whilst men cry out, astonish'd, from the shore,

"'Twas strong but yesterday! ah! now no more!"

15. All men are emulous—in learning's path

An author rouses fellow-author's wrath:

They arm; they fight; (with pens of course!) who'd think

Each has retainers who contend with ink?

So marches king (to liken great with small !)
 With war's parade, on brother king to fall :
 They meet—his injuries each brings to view—
 Then thousands battle for the sake of two !

Mark genius past : and living wits survey—
 Foes Horace had ; and Virgil, in his day.
 Why ? both had talents—both had gain'd renown—
 Could envy see this and not run them down ?—
 Let none who write for censure's silence hope :
 See how the dunces wag'd a war with Pope :
 Now dare him they—now he to action comes—
 Then pens for cannon serv'd ! and verse for bombs !
 Our own days view—look, how each driv'ling sot
 Declaims on errors of the poet Scott :

And says that Campbell, Southey too, and Moore,
 Should cease to write because in genius poor :
 In hope, no doubt, to make their merits sink,
 By pouring on them a whole sea of ink.—
 Just like an eagle hatching cuckoo's eggs,
 Fool creeps to notice between wise man's legs !!

The scent of merit envy's footstep draws :
 Thus 'tis, and will be ! thus it ever was !
 So follow vultures, greedy for their prey,
 On marshall'd hosts which march in war's array.

Men love pre-eminence, whate'er they are.
 Priest, lawyer, doctor, dancing-master, player,
 Watch all occasions, with incessant toil,
 To make their neighbour serve them for a foil.
 Just as a girl (for looks more fam'd than pelf,)
 Walks with an uglier, to show off herself.

Things daily shew this—among men of wit
 Examples seek—for instance, in the pit,
 When a new drama is perform'd, behold
 (Two friends) a critic and the author, scold.
 Exclaims the critic, " Sir, that speech is bad."
 Says author, " What! the very best tirade
 " In all my play?—that's truly hard enough!"—
 " Take my word on't, 'tis miserable stuff!"
 Retorts the critic; " When did grief e'er speak
 " In such a style? 'tis bombast, low, and weak.
 " Forgive my freedom: (but I vow 'tis true;)
 " Crito's a better dramatist than you."—
 " Crito, indeed! I rate above him far;
 " My friends assert as sun unto a star!"—
 " Sir, for your friends I do not care one jot:
 " Crito knows nature: and you know it not.
 " Will you your friends' opinion clash with mine?
 " I've been a critic for years thirty-nine!
 " This is an insult my mind ill endures:
 " As well compare great Shakespeare's plays with yours!"—
 On this they part (good luck if without blows!)
 Thro' life to live the bitterest of foes.

Who breathes that likes to hear, at his expense,
 Another said to be a man of sense?
 And who likes not, upon occasion fit,
 To wound his neighbour with the edge of wit;
 Altho' himself so pain'd by censure's breath,
 That call him " Mævius" he would pine to death?

16. Remark a heath, a common, or a fen,
 Dug, drain'd, manur'd, enclos'd, by hands of men :
 First seen, 'tis wild ; a few years pass ; then lies
 A fertile country, which delights the eyes :
 Where stood the heath, the bulrush, and the sloe,
 Now, corn and wheat, or rye and barley, grow :
 And, where before no herds or flocks were found,
 The shepherd spreads his blanket on the ground,
 With the sweet melody of oaten reed
 Of Chloe singing, while the cattle feed.
 Thro' care and culture barren soil grows kind :
 So comes improvement to the human mind.
 A ploughman rough, who whistles in the lea,
 And the team guides, or ploughs so merrily,
 Plac'd by the side of a collegian shrewd,
 Is like soil cultur'd near a land that's rude.
 Labour rude land, and work it with good lime ;
 It may surpass a richer soil in time :
 So give to ploughman education ; then,
 Rustic no more, he vies with learned men.
 Greek, logic, Latin, Euclid, plough, or spade,
 None more than other for mankind are made ;
 Chance first creates the diff'rence we see ;
 And art completes it ; in or you or me :
 For tho' one know not how to write, that man
 May be than thousands cleverer who can :
 Yet, all at once, were we to place the boor,
 From ploughs 'midst books, his talents would seem poor ;
 Unfit for contrast with a rich man's heir,
 Who, thro' hard stripes, scans Virgil and learns Mair,

Thus the best seed upon a wild land thrown,
Withers, while worse thrives upon dress'd ground sown.

17. Then give your children education, ye
Who on your offspring wish prosperity.
As skilful gard'ners with the plants proceed,
(To train, or check, manure, or prune, at need ;
As weak or strong, requiring aid or thwart ;
Subjecting nature to the yoke of art :)
So be your conduct fitted to your charge :
As need points out, diminish or enlarge.
Who would instruct in mathematic lore,
One who forgets that two and two make four ?
Who would confine to learning A B C,
A mind as brilliant as a mind can be ?
The self same wind puts out a taper's light,
Which, blown on fire, makes vivid and more bright !
So plan out study, and prescribe its hours,
To suit the vigour of the mental powers :
If minds be tender, be a fondling nurse :
If strong, take heed lest they o'ershoot their force :
When fertile soil too soon brings forward grain,
Does not luxuriance prove its greatest bane ?
In ear too heavy, and in stem too weak,
When winds, and rain, their stormy fury wreak,
This fine growing field is levell'd with the mire ;
While grain less fertile 'scapes the tempest's ire.
Dull wit and weak in every way increase,
At proper season and in proper place :

As is in all things, so there is in wit,
 A time to do, another to omit.
 None but a fool a lesson would begin,
 When soldiers pass to warlike music's din :
 Who e'er at dinner learn'd t'extract the cube ?
 As soon will fluid pass thro' unbor'd tube !
 So men lead asses to the water's brink :
 If thirst induce not, who can make them drink ?

18. Blame not wise nature, that thus oft, thro' freak,
 One mind's made sturdy, and another weak.
 Tho' so in science (and so 'tis we see)
 In one great point men claim equality :
 Since all enough of reason have (as dower)
 To guide the conduct—its most useful power !

19. Methinks I hear some voices laugh, and say
 " This rash assertion is prov'd false each day :
 " For who that conduct in the world well reads,
 " Would think it were thus, to observe men's deeds ?"
 How's this derangement upon conduct brought ?
 Tho' all have common sense, all use it not !
 What good brings rudder to a ship on sail
 Unless the seamen make it of avail ?
 Tho' fit for use, a useless log it stands !
 So common-sense seems in unskilful hands.
 This plainest sense (deny it as you chuse)
 Tho' held so trifling, hardest is to use :
 See in how many, with endowments crown'd,
 Its guiding light as in eclipse is found :

And hence it comes ('tis strange ! but still the fact !)
 The best to teach are ever worst to act !
Preceptor shows his neighbour right from wrong :
 Tells to what class of vice his sins belong :
 Calls this, incontinence ; that, love of pelf :
 Yet this *Preceptor* cannot guide himself.
Esprit's a wit : and yet, in conduct, he
 Outdares the statutes of society.
 Mark *Hothead* : genius ; mayhap, scholar too ;
 Yet he does, daily, what no fool would do.
 'The truth's establish'd—be you clown, or king,
 'To speak is easy—to act well's the thing !!

From this rise mortals in the world, we know
 Not downright fools, tho' in appearance so.
 From action judging (till the speech belies
 The form their conduct gave them in our eyes)
 Their scale of sense, altho' in fact well tried,
 At first appears but scantily supplied.
 Thus true it is (tho' strange may seem the rule !)
 The wisest man is oft the greatest fool !

20. Extended far is folly's wide domain ;
 And various subjects amplify its reign :
 With gaping ninnies (where its powers commence)
 It ranks all those who have, but use not sense.
 Folly's best courtiers whom it keeps in sight,
 Are those who err, tho' knowing what is right :
 And running headlong in unthinking course,
 (As proverb says) place cart before the horse.

Claims he our pity, who, with open eyes,
 Hurries where danger in his progress lies?
 His neck gets broke : or, if you will, he's drown'd :—
 We mock ; and say “ his wit could not be sound :”
 But when one meets unwittingly with ill,
 We cry “ alas !” and eyes with sorrow fill.
 Thus, men who know right, and yet do it not,
 Deserve less pity than an erring sot.

Reflect on this ye witty and ye wise ;
 A humbling sight it offers to your eyes :
 How must you blush, to hear it told as true,
 That dunce in conduct higher stands than you :
 And see, that men, whom you style dull and soft,
 Thro' life thrive better than yourselves do, oft,
 Because they cherish (what you proud neglect)
 That common-sense which teaches how to act.—
 Reflect on this : and make your pride swell less :
 The boast of talent vanity 's, alas !
 O man ! be sure that greater merit lies
 In living virtuous, than in seeming wise.



EPISTLE V.

ARGUMENT.

1. On Money. 2. Desire of money universally prevalent. 3. Why it is so. 4. Often the cause of evil. 5. How riches operate on the conduct. 6. A moderate portion of wealth fittest to give enjoyment. 7. The intellectual capacity generally hurt by too great wealth. 8. In what manner riches and poverty are treated by the world. 9. Absurdity of custom on this head. 10. How inconsistent the actions of the rich are in general, and, in consequence, that to the eye of reason they are less happy than those who by poverty are forced to be consistent and virtuous. 11. What alone can ultimately entitle men to respect and consideration. 12. On Avarice. 13. Liberality and Avarice contrasted. 14. Why Prodigality is wrong shewn, by the actions of a prodigal. 15. On the advantages obtained by the possession of money. 16. Truths told which pride will find difficult to digest. 17. All men terrified at the name "poor." 18. On the proper employment of money. 19. On the benefits derived from charity. 20. True charity described, and false exposed.
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1. **READ** time's past leaf; there view the gradual way
Thro' which mankind their present form display.
The hand of heaven (as the genial heat
Of the bright sun ripens the corn or wheat;)
Not all at once (for then 'twas but the spring!)
Taught savage man the use of reason's wing.
Its light disclos'd, to what he should resort
To profit others, and himself support;

Its guiding hand impell'd the cutting spade
 With hostile edge the treasur'd earth t' invade;
 And search its bosom for the hidden store
 Of silver's metal, and the yellow ore.
 All human works, however perfect seen,
 Improve in goodness, when some time they've been
 In constant use, by application strain'd
 To more refinement than they first contain'd :
 Thus money's coin amidst a barb'rous state
 Appear'd as planet of the second rate,
 Till time increas'd it to a first class star ;
 The key of commerce ! and the nerve of war !

2. Desires of wealth, acquir'd in nature, flow
 To feed the channels where men's wishes go,
 And level barriers which their progress hold :
 What magic surer than the touch of gold ?
 All men love riches : Mammon is a god,
 Which, more or less, we venerate and laud.
 Expose a purse, with coin well lin'd, to sight :
 To gain this some would murder, steal, or fight :
 For lucre's sake what will mankind not do ?
 Men are who'd hang a brother for a sous !
 Nor are such scant, who, with vast wealth in store,
 Would brave hell's torture for one penny more !
 With power surpassing intellectual skill,
 Gold can bewitch, and then unwitch, at will :
 Guineas, like fairies in days long since gone,
 Do what we'd credit not though told 'twere done :

All ranks gold rules : what a resistless thing !
 Man's god is money ! money is his king !

3. In this behold associations' sway :
 What can this eagerness for wealth display ?
 Not Nature. Money comes not to the mind
 Until (with comfort or with use combin'd)
 Man's reason strong association makes
 From which, at last, he love for lucre takes :
 This, as th' ideas firmer rooted shoot,
 Makes the desire an ultimate pursuit.

4. And wherefore wonder, in the world, to find
 From morn till night gold sought for by mankind ?
 What breathing mortal would not laugh, and hoot,
 To hear such question of a stranger put ;
 " Is he much better, or, than neighbour worse ?"
 But make th' inquiry of " How stands his purse ?"
 Then praise is heard ; then men your sense enhance :
 He is the wisest who most minds *main chance* !
 Since nations all one common anthem sing,
 " Worth is a bauble ! Mammon is the thing !"

Such thoughts, so common, in the world produce
 Much mischief, error, wickedness, abuse :
 And show the growth of every vice and sin,
 To money's lust to owe first origin.
 Hence murder'd victims find untimely graves :
 Hence groans the gallows with suspended knaves :
 And hence all countries convicts send each day,
 To Cayenne, hundred, as to Bot'ny Bay ;

Which stamps as truth (an awful truth to tell)
The love of money is a key to hell!!

5. We see one soil within its furrows rear
The grain increasing with the rip'ning year ;
And also bear a pois'nous scion's fruit ;
Or deadly nightshade, or the hemlock's root.
The sun's bright rays, which o'er all nature strike,
With warmth impartial ripen both alike.
This soil displays the garden of the mind,
Where good and evil ever lie combin'd ;
The sun's like riches, by whose powerful sway
The hearts of men are opened to the day ;
For riches tend to set our actions forth,
And to advantage to display our worth ;
Or, by their magnet, draw defects to sight,
Which had been hidden if without their light.

6. Behold the feast set out with sumptuous care,
Where daintiest viands, smoking, scent the air,
And Art with Nature's produce is combin'd
To please the palate, and delight the mind :
Behold again, the simple spare, repast,
Where no profuse inciting dainty's plac'd :
Define the best ; the full or homely board ?
At which most happy, be you poor, or lord ?
From which do men derive the truest good ?
In short, which bears the best adapted food ?
'Midst vast profusion, at the sumptuous feast
The body's vigour is sustain'd the least ;

The frugal board upholds the body sound ;
 'Tis there, the healthy, and robust, are found ;
 By wholesome fed not stimulating meat :
 Men eat to live, but do not live to eat !
 Enough for hunger, not enough for waste,
 Is reason's banquet, where lies no distate.—
 'Tis thus with wealth—tho' every earthly joy
 Attends its will, its surfeits ever cloy :
 A sober medium (difficult to hit !)
 In wealth, as all things, is for joy most fit.

7. The earth, where gold and silver ore are found,
 For aught beside, is prov'd a barren ground :
 So seem most men who riches have in store,
 In this way gifted, in most others poor.

Too great indulgence, in a gardener's hand,
 Makes plants to wither which he meant to stand ;
 So, minds when foster'd by the hand of wealth,
 Thro' too much fondling, are destroy'd in health.
 The same plant, blossoms with a finer bloom,
 Expos'd to air, than nourish'd in a room :
 So, men less favour'd have their minds more stout :
 Need's flint strikes wisdom's fire in a lout !

8. Alas ! alas ! how in their conduct's flight
 Men cause alternately our praise and spite.
 See two men meet, and in the street accost :
 " Pray know you, sir, that man who just now cross'd ?"
 " O, yes—the fellow's a right-worthy boor—
 " All give him honesty—but he is poor."

- “ Poor !—Egad, poverty’s not now in vogue !
 “ Who is that other ? ” — “ Rich enough—but rogue. ” —
 “ Rich and a rogue !—what tho’ ? wealth hides the shame—
 “ Wealth is substantial ! honesty’s a name !
 “ A fig for honesty—a straw, say I—
 “ One may be honest, and yet, starving, die—
 “ Give me but wealth ” —the other cries, “ live gear !
 “ Who’d know a poor man when a rich stands near ? ”

Onwards proceed—in the same street, espy
 Two strutting fops—they pass a comrade by !
 (’Twere right to tell you, this man was their friend
 Some few weeks back, when he had cash to spend ;
 But fell mishap, of which he had not heed,
 From wealth reduc’d him suddenly to need.)
 Hear them discourse—“ That’s Jack, our friend, you know ! ”
 “ The devil take it ! let the fellow go !
 “ His coat gets threadbare—he’s no man for us ” —
 “ We knew him once ! ” — “ But wherefore know him thus ?
 “ He is so poor—his credit’s in decay. ”
 Who has not met such reptiles, in his day,
 Whose friendship, only for a time, endures
 Until their pursès weightier get than your’s ?

When mad-brain’d Fashion drives Idea’s train,
 Wealth meets this honour, Poverty disdain.
 Woe’s then the lot of all who put their stay
 On friends who walk in Fashion’s slipp’ry way ;
 When ill attacks them (if they can feel scorn !)
 It well were for them had they ne’er been born ;
 For such friends shun us when misfortunes seize,
 As leaves by wind are hurried from the trees.

Ah! Fashion, truly thou 'rt a foolish thing!
 Altho' mischance, is Poverty a sin?
 That man's a blockhead (be he what he will!)
 Who slights his neighbour on account of ill.
 That man's a treasure, worth his weight in gold,
 Whose friendship can in bad as good fate hold.

9. O, man! vain man! reflect upon thyself;
 Think what thou art, with all thy hordes of pelf:
 What right has one another to despise?
 Man is but man; no higher can he rise!
 Tho' birth give title, Nature is a thing
 Ranks all men equal! from a clown to king!
 What's rank? alas! it ever must exist
 Blood, bones, and flesh; adorn it as you list!
 Talk not of birth—what tho' you be a peer,
 If deaf your're born? will title make you hear?
 If blind—poor wretch! tho' duke should be your sire,
 What canst thou see?—yea, tho' king's son—that's higher!!
 Talk not of wealth with supercilious shout—
 Can riches keep thee from the stone, or gout?
 Can all Potosi, added to Peru,
 For frame enfeebled purchase health anew?
 Do we not all walk daily to the tomb?
 The king! the lord! the scavenger! the groom!
 And when we die, lo! few short feet of mould
 Is all we have—you with, I without, gold!
 Alas! in spite of wealth, or rank, he hath,
 Man is but animal which perisheth!!

Read, Pride, this monitor, before you fly ;
 “ The poor are brothers, soar you e’er so high.”
 Rank is no touchstone by which worth should pass :
 Oft noblest mortals are in lowest class :
 And judging man, as conduct gives us rules,
 The greatest fortunes make the greatest fools.

10. Behold the rich—chagrins with them abide,
 Tho’ with all comforts upon earth supplied.—
 To-day they love ; to-morrow they detest ;
 Adore next day ; the subsequent make jest :
 This hour profuse ; next parsimonious ; see
 They live in splendour, yet in misery !
 In morning happy, ere the noon-day vex’d,
 They laugh one moment, and they weep the next :
 They now desire ; and straight desire they not :
 Displeas’d, for ever, with the things they’ve got,
 They lavish thousands while they cry, “ Woe’s me !
 “ Would life were o’er—then sorrows cease to be :”—
 And yet they weep when death its warrant shows :
 Thus, man with wealth to inconsistency goes !
 The rich need every virtue that is known,
 To please in other’s eyes, or in their own.

Behold the poor—with patience gifted, he
 Consistent, happy lives in poverty.—
 What, tho’ without fix’d lodging he be seen ?
 The great man’s gateway serves him for a screen !
 What, tho’ he sleep upon cold earth, or stone ?
 There well he sleeps, as richer upon down !

What, tho' his food be pulse? his drink be whey?
 He waits, like others, death's appointed day!
 What, tho' the wight in solitude we find
 Compell'd t' avoid the commerce of his kind;
 The smiles of beauty; and the laugh of mirth?
 Restrain'd from vice, and vanity, on earth,
 He sees and shuns the follies of mankind;
 And makes his dog companion, and a friend!
 What, tho' the means of sustenance to gain,
 He serve the proud, or be a slave to vain?
 Their scoffs in him a silent pity move;
 And, from their faults, he learns himself t' improve!
 What, tho' for bread, he be compell'd to brave
 The battle's peril, or the stormy wave?
 A poor lone wand'rer, weary of the world,
 Him storms affright not on the ocean hurl'd:
 And in the fray, the flash of cannons, near,
 Illumes his face, but brings to light no fear:
 At last, time come that he must live no more,
 He thanks his God that life's turmoil is o'er.
 Say, which does Reason with most praise behold,
 The man of poverty, or man of gold?

11. To weigh man's merit as he's poor or rich,
 Is, of all follies, the extent and pitch.
 Observe a fool adorn'd with riches' show;
 And place a wiser in a sphere below:
 The fool's a fool: and, spite of all his gold,
 Will grow more foolish as he grows more old.

Or worth, or sense, alone can bring respect :
 Tho' money often patches wit's defect ;
 Yet (like the tinsel, glaring to the sight
 When first 'tis made with gaudy glitter bright ;
 Till, us'd awhile, it shows the inside tin !)
 Such wit is tarnish'd which much use has seen.—
 And tho', perforce of money, knaves acute
 Attract attention, purchasing repute ;
 Yet (like the mine, which, while its bed is stor'd
 With gold and silver, daily is explor'd
 With busy hands, as by admiring eyes ;
 But when its treasure rifled is, which lies
 Neglected quite ; a cavern waste, and drear !)
 His money spent, none then approach him near.

12. In minds inflam'd with lust for sordid gain,
 We trace the roots of Avarice in men :
 This vile affection (as a sore disease !)
 Despoils a mortal of his peace and ease.
 The dire infection never quits its hold :
 If caught when young, 'tis ten times worse when old.
 Like him, whose sins did Jove's displeasure bring,
 In streams Tartarian wading to his chin,
 Consum'd by thirst ; for his offences dread,
 The waters vanish as he bends his head ;
 Tho' stor'd with presents with a future good,
 This passion hungers in the midst of food.

13. Far other lot the lib'ral man awaits :
 A thankful crowd stands daily at his gates :

And as he passes, hear you, how they cry,
 " God bless you, sir ; and may you never die :
 " For sorrow waits us when the day shall come
 " Which gives your body to the rotting tomb."
 Such man in conduct noble, and correct,
 Is seen with joy, and treated with respect :
 And his fair virtues, like the sun's bright rays,
 Distribute radiance for his children's praise.
 He toils for wealth ; but not in selfish mood ;
 Desiring money for his neighbour's good,
 His bounteous largesses to all extend ;
 To tenant, kindred, to acquaintance, friend.
 His house looks blithe ; his land abundance yields ;
 His herds and flocks grow fat in the rich fields :
 Nor ox nor sheep thro' rot or murrain moans :
 E'en beasts are happy which a good man owns !
 Sorrow unknown, all prosp'rous look assumes ;
 Inanimation flourishes, and blooms ;
 While things that breathe, well cloth'd, and fully fed,
 In joy arising, go in mirth to bed ;
 With wish (unlike the common herd of men !)
 That the same day might run its course again.
 He sees all this ; and with his household shares
 The gen'ral pleasure ; stranger unto cares,
 No way profuse, nor yet too meanly near,
 His wealth with prudence dealing, here and there,
 In conscious worth his life glides smoothly on :
 His virtues live when dust to dust is gone !
 For when life's spirit ceases to exist,
 As he blest others, so in turn he's blest.

Now shift the scene ; and the wan miser see
 In cold, in rags, in dearth, in misery.
 Mark how thro' life he shows, in every whim,
 That he serves money, not his money him.
 Look how the fool each hour removes, in stealth,
 To see no harm has come unto his wealth :
 And when he counts, again he hides the horde ;
 Kneels before Mammon, and forgets the Lord.
 Lo ! bags of gold upon his table thrown :
 Yet mark the reptile dining on a bone :
 And hear, when finish'd, how he says, " 'tis crime
 " To waste the crumbs : they'll serve another time :"
 His servants telling, " Copy one that 's wise,
 " And eat but little, seeing money flies."
 A heifer dies, half famish'd, of the itch :
 This flesh he eats !—you 'd throw it in the ditch.
 O'er all his lands, yea, at his threshold's posts
 Weeds thrive in crops, because a mower costs :
 With paper panes his chamber-window's patch'd :
 And as slates fall his mansion's roof is thatch'd :
 At last, his house, in ruins, threatens fall ;
 Yet he repairs not, tho' he dreads each squall.
 In rain and wind he shivers, as in snow,
 O'er a few embers, which 'midst ashes glow :
 And still his theme is, ever and anon,
 " My precious money ! God ! how soon 'tis gone !"
 Men shun his sight ; or if they meet him, rail ;
 The dogs look at him, but wag not their tail ;
 Knowing 'tis folly upon him to fawn
 Who fed them never—at noontide, or dawn.

His flinty heart is lock'd to every plan
 Which should adorn, or dignify, a man.
 Behold his son, his daughter, and his wife,
 Thro' him withheld from needful things of life;
 And lean in figure, jaundic'd in their skin,
 Held in derision, for this wretch's sin.
 His son, wife, daughter, unto death are nigh:
 "Physicians cost," he says, "then let them die:
 "A cure to that, a fun'ral comes to this:
 "'Tis best they die: the funeral costs less."
 On bed of sickness, when life's tale's nigh told,
 He sighs, and utters, "Must I leave my gold!"
 Relations come to ask him of his health,
 He calls them, cormorants who hunt his wealth;
 And bids them quickly from his bed-side haste.
 How can such soul affection's pleasure taste?
 Despis'd he liv'd: in manner like he dies:
 His bier's attended by no weeping eyes:
 By none belov'd (for he lov'd only self,
 And liv'd for nothing but amassing pelf:)
 His tomb-stone stands a monument of shame,
 The heavenly vengeance, and man's hate, to claim.
 I would not leave so vile a name behind
 For all the wealth contain'd in wealthy Ind!
 Nor would I wish that thro' this life of care,
 A friend of mine should leave me his rich heir!
 Tho' sad the picture, yet the painting, true,
 Displays the scene (which we too often view!)
 When hoary mortals step into the grave,
 Thinking of nothing but the way to save

A penny's copper, or a guinea's gold.
Such minds by folly, not by sense, are rul'd.

14. In use of money from extremes beware,
Too little thought is bad as too great care :
A niggard's hateful : all such mortals scout
Who twice view farthings ere they lay them out ;
And note each mite, deserving not the pain,
To find the balance of expence and gain.
Yet shun alike the hair-brain'd giddy spark,
Who, dunn'd by beggars (saying, " Kind sir, hark,
" We're ragged, cold, and poor in the true sense ;")
Cries " Take this pound ; I never carry pence."
'Tis well, you'll say, the needy thus to help :
But mark ; this man gives hundreds for a whelp !
He dines to-day for fifty guineas cost !
Then goes to dice, and counts a thousand lost !
And flings his money, thick as rain which pours,
To boxers, jockeys, cockfighters, and whores !
When thus wealth flies, we know not where or when,
We harm ourselves, laugh'd at by other men :
Alike for good and bad intents it goes :
'Tis this on prodigals an odium throws.

The strongest bows will snap when too much bent,
And foil the archer in his keen intent ;
So human actions to extremes which go
Misgive in purpose, like the o'erstrain'd bow.

15. Riches are good accordingly as us'd ;
With prudence manag'd, or neglect abus'd.

Wealth misapplied is fellest curse from heaven :
 But us'd aright, the greatest blessing given :
 For wealth will bless if man will blessed be !
 Bringing respect, and independency,
 With wealth we prosper, and without it want.
 Who cares a doit for one whose means are scant ?
 While the purse glitters, and its monies clink,
 Lo ! thousands follow at your nod and wink.
 But how reverse is't when without the gear
 Men scoff, exclaiming " Pray what would you here !"
 And shut their doors against you in the rain,
 Nor heeding bodily nor mental pain !
 While the world's way continues as now 'tis,
 A well stock'd purse is the best friend that is !
 How shameful then when rich men so behave
 To turn this friend to the worst foe they have.
 And ah ! how sad when fellow men we see
 Spend wretched lives, compell'd by poverty.

16. Ah ! pride with folly ever is combin'd !
 Man needs must pay for shelter from the wind ;
 And bring his reck'ning with him in his hand
 Or else feel hunger in a fertile land ;
 While the wild fox, the lion, and the bear,
 Pay not for lodging, food, or fur they wear :
 And yet, proud man by plagues beset, and dearth,
 Says " What's like me upon the face of earth !"
 The savage natives of the dusky grove,
 To int'rest strangers, woo their mates for love ;

But man must money carry by his side,
 Else never know the pleasures of a bride :
 And yet, through pride, from such truths turning face,
 Man cries " What's happy as the human race !"
 Of all God's creatures, what on earth is sent
 As man, so wretched and so arrogant ?

17. " Hold ! stuff ! " a voice says, " thou poetic elf
 " Thou rail'st at money because poor thyself.
 " From diff'rent sites things diff'rently we view :
 " I've store of gold, and think your words untrue"—
P. " To one whose father died upon a tree
 " A rope sounds harsh—so poverty to me !"
A. " You own the charge ?"—*P.* " Not I ; you may be sure :
 " It suits but rich men to avouch *we're poor* !
 " For poor to be, and also poor to seem,
 " Gives insult food !—then let us drop the theme."
A. " On one condition."—*P.* " Say, what must I do ?"
A. " Wealth's proper use show clearly to the view ;
 " To guide rich Nabobs, like myself, to heaven."—
P. " Heaven's shut to such ; at least to six in seven !"
A. " Peace ! or your penury to light I'll bring."
P. " Hush, hush, good Sir ! I'm going to begin."
 Who's that who laughs ? If the name "poor" I shun,
 I only do what is by others done
 At loss of peace on earth, risk 'yond the grave—
 Why laugh at me when like disease you have ?

18. Come now my muse, unfold (as you best can)
 From what proceeds wealth's greatest good to man.—

Does the whole sum and substance of it seem
 To lie concenter'd in a self-esteem,
 Which vainly says (contemplating a store)
 " Here's wealth enough for fifty years and more :
 " My herds and flocks roam o'er a hundred fields :
 " My well-stock'd garden thousand dainties yields :
 " For me the husbandmen (while I repose)
 " In summer heats work, as in winter snows :
 " The harness'd steeds for me their bridles champ :
 " And the gilt coach screens me from cold and damp :
 " In short, whate'er as luxury is known
 " Plac'd in my reach I have, and call my own ?"
 Or is't in telling, with a proud conceit,
 " My wealth's now floating in the home-bound fleet :
 " And bales of merchandize abroad I've sent,
 " Which I expect to bring me cent. per cent. ;
 " And give me means, in all points, to appear
 " As well as, better than, the wealthiest here ?"
 How very vain—ah, me ! how very slight
 Is money's blessing look'd at in such light.
 May we not now, like Job, in days of yore,
 Lose, in an instant, all our vaunted store ?
 Our herds and flocks to pillage may be given !
 And our fields blighted by the lights of heaven !
 Our limbs, that once reclin'd in ease and show,
 May yet be forc'd to tread in mud, and snow !
 And our fair fingers, deck'd with rubies now,
 Be made to hold the pickaxe, or the plough !
 May not rough storms engulph rich ships that float,
 And bring their purse-proud owners to a groat ;

Who, seeing poor men, wont were to exclaim,
 " I thank thee God that I'm not like to them ?"
 What good from pride in such fall'n state is got ?
 To say, " I had wealth, now I have it not !"
 Dare souls so selfish, with a mournful face,
 Hope to obtain assistance in distress ?
 Must they not fear to knock at neighbour's door,
 Lest he should say " Thou hadst when I was poor,
 " But never fed nor screen'd me from the cold,
 " Altho' thou knew'st I hungry was, and old.
 " Go now, proud fool, and learn, from what thou art,
 " That gold is trash without a feeling heart."

19. O ye, who wealth from heaven's high hand enjoy,
 In acts of charity your purse employ.
 O, never pass the ragged and forlorn
 With words of insult, or the look of scorn ;
 Nor push those from you whom you hear to say
 " I have not eaten the least bit to-day :
 " Think me not rude your notice thus to draw :
 " Alas ! necessity observes no law :
 " I hope and pray you never may be made
 " To know the sorrows of those begging bread.
 " Than now I am I have much better been,
 " Tho' without raiment, food, or house to screen,
 " I ask you here for wherewithal to live.
 " The Lord will prosper you for what you give."
 The finest use of wealth is to supply
 The empty hand, and dry the weeping eye ;

To soothe the widow when her troubles press ;
 And be a father to the fatherless ;
 To free the men who thro' misfortunes fail,
 And flinty creditors consign to jail ;
 Or, if you cannot extricate them quite,
 From bread and water save each hapless wight ;
 And when diseases on the victims frown,
 Renew their straw, or, if you can, send down.
 Such deeds are grand, and admiration gain !
 These are the actions God approves in men !
 Then should disaster come upon your state,
 The good you've done will mitigate your fate ;
 And this reflection blunt misfortune's rod,
 " It is not my fault ! 'tis the will of God !"
 Then seek your neighbour, and say " Woe is me !
 " Relieve me now for what I've done for thee !"
 And every door will open, as you go,
 To give asylum from pursuit of woe ;
 And if not here, hereafter hope to prove
 That good on earth done 's register'd above.

20. Some men the coin of charity employ
 Destroy'd in substance by a vile alloy :
 This use makes current, tho' a faulty die :
 'Tis much like gold and paper currency ;
 One kind is good wherever it be cast :
 The other's rubbish when a limit's past.
 By one sure test true charity we know,
 When hearts are softened at the sight of woe

To clothe the naked, and give hunger food ;
 Not for vain-glory, but for sake of good.
 How hateful 'tis to see, with noisy fuss,
 Men giving charity, exclaiming thus,—
 “ Here, beggar ! ho ! ” (while eyes are looking on)
 “ Take this half-crown : I'll fetch you more anon :
 “ Or come with me, and get the scraps and crust
 “ Which fill my pantry now, collecting must.
 “ Bid my head servant give them to your hand :
 “ If he refuse it, say 'tis my command :
 “ And from him too I order you to have
 “ Another shilling to the alms I gave.”
 Admire the hand whose charity alone
 Assists the wretched, to the world unknown.
 This brilliant deed no misty clouds obscure ;
 Its light unborrow'd shines with lustre pure ;
 Tho' hid from man 'tis mark'd in heaven's record.
 To help the needy is to give the Lord !!

EPISTLE VI.

ARGUMENT.

1. Difficult to assign precisely the limits of good and evil.
 2. Pride and folly the primary causes of almost all human misfortunes.
 3. The most prosperous often the first to complain.
 4. The best method to discover when we are well or ill off in the world.
 5. Necessary to struggle against adversity.
 6. How this struggle dignifies mankind.
 7. On the fickleness of fortune.
 8. How it is best to regulate conduct in regard to fortune.
 9. Adversity when slightly, when severely felt.
 10. This illustrated.
 11. How sudden changes of fortune affect mankind.
 12. True happiness rarely met with, and why this is so.
 13. What temper of mind most likely to ensure happiness.
 14. From what sources the greatest pleasures and pains in human nature proceed.
 15. The dispensation of nature vindicated with respect to the allotment of human happiness and misery.
 16. Absurdity of thinking that the condition of a man's worldly state is the cause of happiness.
 17. Attempt to describe a truly happy state.
 18. The happy situation of Britons contrasted with the state of other nations.
 19. The qualifications pointed out which are certain to procure happiness to every person in every place.
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1. WHERE good recedes, and evil comes in sight,
What pen ne'er told, how can mine bring to light?
Enough all know of human kind, to see
That this man's joy is that man's misery.
Ask two men, " Pray what ails you, sirs?" you'll find
The sun's heat one plagues, and the other wind!

Rich men we hear, altho' in gilded chaise,
 With heavy hearts, cry "We are not at ease."
 And turning round a poor man's voice says "Damn!
 "Would I were any thing but what I am!"
 A cot near sea, and garden sown with plants,
 (Where little serves, because abridg'd in wants;)
 Which I'd think Paradise; most strange to tell!
 Perhaps, my neighbour might describe as Hell;
 And weep to live so far from London's roar;
 The country hating, and the dull seashore.
 Who lives that thinks not in some point he's curs'd?
 And each conceives his own distress the worst!

2. Exclaim not, man, with a presumptuous voice,
 "What must be will be: I have left no choice."
 Think'st thou, O madman! on each slight pretext,
 That God is happy when he sees thee vex'd?
 What makes in thee or good or ill to spring?
 'Tis thy opinion: it is not the thing.
 Look at a rustic, and a king with crown;
 One has a straw bed; and the other down;
 Now say; does God distress upon them draw,
 When boor for down longs, and the king for straw?
 And when the change has taken place, like sots,
 They sigh again to have their former lots;
 Which, when possess'd of, each of them despis'd;
 Blessings till lost are never fully priz'd!!
 When Nature's gifts perversely we employ,
 Pain comes from pleasure, and distress from joy:

From pride, from folly, our misfortunes flow :

Man is himself the cause of his own woe !

Behold a man in midst of blessings gruff :

Demand the cause—" Fate gives me not enough !"

O fool !—enough !—is this thy grief ?—woe's me !

What is enough ?—shall I define to thee ?—

One sighs to get three hundred pounds a year.

" How I could live," says he, " with that sum clear !"

'Tis got—he's happy ?—ah ! not so—for then,

When three are got, his mind's agog for ten !

Alas ! how few their wishes can restrain !

A man when poor on pewter eats ; but when

In life he rises, lo ! the silly elf

His pewter changes for a set of delf :

And when, by wealth, advanc'd to still higher state,

His table groans with services of plate :

And then, we see (as Philip's son, of yore !)

He weeps to think that he can get no more :

And tho' to him all bliss, on earth, be given,

The madman sighs to taste the joys of heaven.—

Know then, " enough," for which thou hop'st at last,

Is something more than thou already hast !

O, human weakness ! O, the cares of earth !

See how in plenty men imagine dearth :

Infirm of purpose, behold mortal men

Long, seek, and find ; long, seek, and find again ;

No sooner gifted with a wish, alas !

Than off they set upon another chace.

So foolish school-boys, for the sake of freak,

Hide something, find it ; hide anew, and seek !—

As waves on waves, upon the restless sea,
 Rise, roll, reach land, then break, successively;
 Or strongly, weakly, sweeping on their way;
 Yet ceasing never on the mildest day;
 So the desires, within the mind of man,
 Rise, roll, and vanish, on successive plan.

3. Ah me! how many blest, and free from cares,
 Robust in health, and lucky in affairs,
 Exclaim, as loaded with the plagues of heaven,
 "I do not thrive; nor ever have I thriven;
 "Ill luck attends me, whereso'er I go;
 "Like siroc winds which wither where they blow!"
 Such words deserve nor notice nor relief:
 Real misfortune talks not of its grief!
 It goes not forth, in open day, to moan
 In streets and highways;—it laments alone!

4. Such then blame Fortune when 'tis wrong they should:
 Conceiving evil in the midst of good.
 This comes, when minds aspire beyond their sphere,
 To seek the distant, and despise what's near:
 With eyes set upwards, never turning low,
 They view fate's blessings, but its ills don't know:
 To live contented, view what moves between:
 Be rich! be great! be middling! be mean!
 'Tis well our fate to weigh in wisdom's scales:
 'Tis then that reason over fate prevails:
 Hold fair the balance, and compare your lot
 With what another in the world has got:

'Tis by comparison we're brought to view
 If evil's fancied, or if evil's true :
 'Tis by comparison we're led to see
 If fortune's bounteous ; and in what degree :
 Trace but the woes which on the earth abound ;
 And then thank heaven that as you are you're found.

5. Tho' fate be rugged, men should still advance
 With hearts unshaken at the fearful glance,
 And strive, with noble energy of mind,
 To merit better than, perhaps, they find.
 More praise is due to them who gain a port
 When toss'd, by tempests, as the ocean's sport ;
 Than them who reach a destin'd creek in lakes,
 Where wind disturbs not, nor a wave e'er breaks.

6. What sight more noble in this worldly state,
 Than virtue struggling with the storms of fate ?
 Like a steep rock ; whose rugged grandeur shows
 Its form, the butt of every wind that blows ;
 And which, the rain, the drifting snow, and hail,
 With ceaseless fury, on all points, assail ;—
 Tho' stripp'd of verdure in the awful fray,
 Withstanding still, to-morrow as to-day,
 The sullen mass, as if it scorn'd to flinch,
 Falls not, nor reels, but crumbles inch by inch.
 This cliff, tho' barren, from its aspect bold,
 The eyes of all men with applause behold :
 And thus, when virtue by misfortune's shock
 Stands stripp'd of fortune, as of fruit the rock,

Its conscious worth disdaining to repine,
A model shows, impressive and divine.

7. Of fortune's favours none should vainly boast :
'Tis not the best it cherishes the most :
It blindfold gives : and blindfold too withdraws
Favours conferr'd : knowing no stated laws,
A moment's space may disarrange its plan ;
Turn woe to joy, and joy to woe in man.

The ocean, govern'd by the weather's spleen,
Resembles Fortune with its fickle mien :—
Now boist'rous, dashing 'gainst the foamy strand ;
Now rippling gently to attain the land ;
It finely shows unstable fate's extremes ;
As evil lowers ! or good shoots radiant beams !

8. Observe how mariners (tho' weather fair !)
With prudent foresight against storms beware :
So ever sail in fortune's varying sea,
Prepar'd for change, however fair 't may be !

9. The men from countries desolate, and cold,
Are hardier far, and, commonly, more bold,
Than those whom warmth and luxury conspire
To waste in strength, and mollify in fire :
So men inur'd to adverse fortune's sting,
Thro' habit think it not so dire a thing :
They know no better ; and thus slightly feel
What gives another wounds which never heal.

They bear it worst who have good fortune known :
When that takes flight all joy with it has flown.

10. See a poor mortal who in country wild
First drew his breath, of poverty the child :
He lives a beggar ; and with raiment torn,
Entreats for charity, with air forlorn.
You give him groat, or penny :—which you chuse !—
Does pride his cheeks with sorrow's tint suffuse ?
Or, says he, “ God ! why am I brought so low ? ”
Can the mind feel for what it does not know ?
Look now to one (ah ! how reverse the scene !)
Who high was born, and affluent had been,
By sudden chance upon misfortune hurl'd :
For him what comfort is there in the world ?
Forsook by them who, in his better fate,
Shar'd in his wealth, drank at his cost, and ate ;
Or with disdain us'd by unfeeling friends,
Who shun his sight when once good fortune ends ;
Can he submit in this untoward plight
To say, “ Give something to a needy wight ? ”
Will he not rather quit the haunts of men,
And pray that death may ease him of his pain ?
For while he lives, in whatsoever clime,
Sad tears will trickle on the wing of time,
As thought presents comparison, to sight,
Of present sorrow with the past delight.

11. Reverses, brought in unexpected hour
By fortune's sunshine, or its sudden lower,

(Such is the frailty of our mortal state!)
 Distress too greatly, or too much elate:
 Chang'd for the worse, we mourn for what's no more:
 To rise is good! to fall when risen is sore!—
 Men fall'n from wealth, compell'd to beg for bread,
 Thro' grief's excess put pistols to their head.—
 Chang'd for the better, we are borne on pride
 Whither fate's call ordains we shall reside;
 Our last forgot, and present state unknown:
 Like ragged beggars on a golden throne!
 All in good fortune in their conduct err;
 But in adversity shows character!
 With servants, plate, house, coaches, horses, hounds,
 The pride of upstarts overthrows all bounds!
 But when oppress'd by the dread hand of woe,
 Proud man, perforce, is taught himself to know!
 Hence 'tis we see some bashful, and asham'd,
 Who once were haughty; thro' misfortune tam'd:
 While others strut, in pride, along the street,
 Who, not long since, lack'd wherewithal to eat.
 A man, now poor, and, to appearance, silly,
 Will talk when rich, and joke when dubb'd "Sir Billy:"
 And one who, low, wears meekness in his face,
 Will swear, and bluster, when he's styl'd "His Grace."
 Fate changes tempers as the season climes!
 Times change with men! and men change with the times
 A middle state, between excess and dearth,
 Is best adapted for the sons of earth:
 From too great rise, or too severe a fall,
 Should form petitions in the prayers of all.

12. Conceive that time (the age by poets sung !)

When chaste contentment o'er all nature shone :
 When (war's dread din unknown to mortal ear)
 No nation liv'd in jealousy and fear :
 When widows ne'er bemoan'd in plaintive strain :
 Nor children wept a luckless father slain :
 When earth (untillag'd by the spade or plough !)
 Groan'd with its fruits, which sprung no one knew how :
 When streams of milk and limpid honey ran :
 And man ne'er hunger'd, sicken'd, or was wan :
 When o'er the world pure pleasure pour'd its balm :—
 An age of gold ! when nature all was calm !
 That age conceive—then, happiness all knew :
 Those days no more, true happiness then flew !
 The vision's sweet : but as in nightly dream
 Where heavenliest pleasures on the fancy teem,
 At morning's summons, when sleep leaves the eyes,
 The sense of pleasure with the vision flies :
 So happ'ness built in fancy's heated brain,
 When reason wakes, can ne'er its form retain ;
 With fancy's warmth its ecstasy has flown.
 Alas ! to few true happiness is known !
 It likes not soils which crumble, and decay :
 But only builds where rocks ensure a stay.
 Which most like man ; the rock, or sandy soil ?
 Be not deceiv'd to fall in error's toil :—
 No one who lives is born to taste its joy,
 As fancy paints it, or without alloy.

13. As minds are form'd it ever builds its cell,
 In narrow space, or ample room, to dwell :
 It loves to be where tranquil minds exist :
 Men are but happy as they think they're blest !
 The ardent minds which, burst thro' all restraint,
 Chimeras chasing, till their fancies faint,
 Are far less happy than the minds, which wait,
 In cool expectance, the cast up of fate :
 The restless minds, like surges of the deep,
 Attempt to pass the limits they must keep :
 The other's current smoothly glides along ;
 Unruffled, rolling where its streams belong.
 With what thou hast, then, pleas'd be man, and know
 Thy hand's too small to grasp all joys below.

14. From inward causes, not from outward things,
 The purest source of happiness begins.
 Sensations which take origin in mind,
 Strong at their rise, in course we stronger find :
 Whereas, all those external senses give,
 Tho' fierce at first, but short time after live.
 'Gainst falchion's anguish, or the musket's woes,
 What man so puny cannot strength oppose ?
 But who, so abject among men, is found
 'Gainst coward's name, or villain's, to keep ground ?
 Know then, mankind, (what all should feel, and know !)
 Of all the ills that come to you below,
 The direst evils on your kind alight
 From Honour's blemish, or from Virtue's blight.

So as the pain, external pleasure's boast
 Before internal, vanishing, is lost.
 The purest pleasures to the human sense
 Are those whose springs in moral source commence.
 When honour, purg'd of its fantastic views,
 A sober bent in all its ends pursues ;
 And the affections, as their courses roll,
 Display pure love for the created whole ;
 Then, man proclaim, unto the spheres above,
 Best joy is virtue ! and first bliss is love !—
 Pray heaven, all ye who happiness would find,
 For health, sound wisdom, and true peace of mind :—
 Ah ! certain 'tis that vanity 's the whole,
 Save health, good conduct, and contented soul !

15. As none can ever taste a perfect bliss
 Without alloy defiling happiness ;
 So none are quite in misery immers'd
 Without some blessings kindly interspers'd.
 In wisdom Nature keeps this middle plan :
 Too great extremes were dangerous to man :
 From perfect good would apathy ensue,
 Inducing man to keep from heaven its due :
 Evil, administer'd in too great load,
 Would shake man's confidence in gracious God.—
 Ah ! ne'er presume your fate's decree to curse :
 In bad be thankful that it is no worse :
 When it is good, in gratitude for bliss,
 Thank heaven's direction that it is as 'tis.

16. Who studies nature, God's vast wisdom views.
 All may be happy—all men—if they chuse !
 Heaven makes no diff'rence in its creatures, tho'
 To men's weak sight a star makes high, rags low.
 Wealth, pomp, and titles, all have not—what then ?
 Are their possessors solely happy men ?
 The same air fills the lungs of boor, and peer :
 So heaven made happ'ness common for all here !
 Then say not, “ Ah ! why is it order'd so
 “ That some so high stand, others rank so low—”
 What real diff'rence, prithee, do we find
 'Tween rich and great men, and the working hind ?
 I grant you those may ride in coach and six,
 While these who work are wounded by the pricks :
 And those may eat on silver, sleep on down,
 While straw and pewter are for less renown :
 In palace those ; these tenants of a cot :
 Exterior's all the diff'rence of their lot !
 Were the mind's cares upon the forehead wrote,
 Many now envied, pity would promote :
 Ah ! true it is, in mortal man's affairs,
 A lofty station is the site of cares !
 At morning's dawn, behold the poor hind go
 To plough, or dig, manure the ground, or sow ;
 The live-long day attentive to his art ;
 Whistling, and singing, which shows joyous heart.—
 His betters rise—(I mean in birth, and wealth !)
 Carry their faces the same bloom of health ?
 And from them hear we, as they pass along,
 The thoughtless whistle, or the jocund song ?

How oft the rich their riches have outrun :
 Then, each man met is fear'd to be a dun !
 And look how great men (courtiers, if you please !)
 In midst of splendour, have hearts ill at ease,
 Lest next gazette they be, thro' other's wile,
 Stripp'd of the office which maintains their style.
 The evening comes—the weary workman now
 Unyokes his team, or lays aside his plough ;
 And hastens, homewards, to his cottage fire :
 There, his fond children, who await their sire,
 Pleas'd at his sight, evince their heartfelt joy ;
 One lisp'ing stories ! while one shows a toy !
 And loving wife, in the utensils rude,
 Prepares his homely, but sound wholesome, food :
 Which ate, to God he says his prayers, and straight
 Burdens the bedstead with his weary weight :
 Fears he the advent of to-morrow's sun ?
 Tho' straw's his bed ! and pillows—he has none !
 Blest, rich and great, who, like this hind, can boast,
 “ Days all are welcome ! Sundays welcome most ! ”
 Few great, few rich men can assert this thing :
 The rustic then is happier than the king !

17. Blest is the spot, and hallow'd is the ground
 Where unsophisticated nature's found :
 In which, we view, without disgusting strife,
 (A perfect model !) patriarchal life :
 Where parent, circled with fond offspring, knows
 All wake in harmony ; and thus repose ;

With one fix'd object graven on the heart,
 "The good of all, and not the good of part."
 Sharing contentedly in common toil,
 One takes the spade, and cultivates the soil;
 Like the sage Roman who preferr'd the plough
 To wearing wreaths of honour on his brow :
 The rest work diff'rently, while this one delves ;
 And thus form small republic, of themselves,
 Where each, attentive to his proper call,
 Adds to the wealth and happiness of all.
 Happy this state ! for pleasures ever stay
 To crown the bus'ness of the passing day :
 There all is calm ! no thoughts disturb the soul
 For kindred shiv'ring at the frozen pole :
 Nor e'er comes sorrow that the torrid zone
 Impairs the health of those we call our own :
 There, when clouds roll, winds whistle, tempests roar,
 Pity is felt for those expos'd—no more !
 For there, we dread not lest the faithless wave
 Bear friends we love to an untimely grave :
 Nor apprehend we lest the ruffled main
 Decrease our wealth, by swallowing our gain.
 A peaceful home, with relatives all near,
 Blunts life's worst stings ; adversity and fear !
 There, with content, health, happiness, and ease,
 Make everlasting enviable peace.

18. Blest is this state—in Britain doubly blest !
 Here, men have comforts, luxury, and rest,

While other mortals thro' the world, bemoan
 Their countries pillag'd, and their laws o'erthrown :
 Retain'd by force, in unpropitious day,
 The timid slaves of a despotic sway ;
 And driv'n along (alas ! what piteous sight !)
 Against their will to mingle in the fight,
 To spill their blood, for things they care not for,
 A tyrant's glory to procure, and power :
 Or forc'd abroad, as emigrants, to roam,
 Debarr'd the comforts of a native home,
 In distant climates, parted from all those
 Who have or will or means to heal their woes :—
 Alike to Britons herald's trumpets play
 Which peace proclaim, or notify affray :
 Our shores bid proud defiance to the foe :
 Our fleets victorious thro' the ocean go :
 Britannia holds the sceptre of the deep,
 Which Neptune gave her, and thus bids her keep ;
 “ Retain this charm, and ne'er shall foreign wile
 “ Invade the mansions of my favourite isle.”
 Our laws are not by haughty conquerors broke :
 Nor are we subject to a tyrant's yoke :
 We are not forc'd to serve in war, and kill,
 Unless, for fame, we do it of free will :
 We earn in honest industry our bread ;
 Without subservience, or anxious dread ;
 For well we know oppression dares not strike,
 Since British laws guard all mankind alike :
 This day we plan ; and execute the next,
 (If God be willing !) with no fear perplex :

For sport or bus'ness we far journeys make,
 Convinc'd at home in peace friends sleep and wake :
 Our tranquil dwellings never are assail'd
 By snorting chargers, nor by warriors mail'd :
 No one comes here with bloody sword, or lance,
 To check the pleasures of the lightsome dance ;
 But happy peasants, on the cheerful lawn,
 Enjoy their sports, at evening, or dawn :
 No rough invader interrupts the shade
 Where love-sick Damon wooes the coyish maid :
 No ruthless trooper sets our house on fire :
 Nor on our virgins satiates his desire :
 What man dares go with a destructive hand
 To spoil the ripening produce of the land ?
 Or draw his sword, and say, " Give me what's thine,
 " Or I will strike, and cleave thee to the chine ?"
 We hear War's rumour ; but itself ne'er see ;
 That worst of evils !—thankful should we be !—
 While told of carnage in the field of strife,
 We still enjoy the good things of this life ;—
 Excepting few, who, in the fighting host,
 In honour's cause, have friend or kindred lost ;
 And weep to think that those they lov'd are slain,
 No more to visit the abode of men ;
 Exclaiming wildly, " Ah ! my love ! my brave !
 " Who shut your eye-lids ? and who fill'd your grave ?
 " Methinks, alas ! I see your form, so fair,
 " Expos'd, unburied, to the wolf and bear !
 " Or by rude hands beneath the cold turf thrown
 " Midst heaps of dead, now mouldering unknown !

" Would no one stretch your body on a bier,
 " And pay the tribute of affection's tear?
 " Or place this epitaph to grace your name—
 " He died in battle, now he sleeps with fame?
 " A curse on war with such dire evils fraught!
 " By it what misery on earth is brought!
 " The helpless matron, from her husband torn,
 " Lives with her children friendless and forlorn!
 " The loving hearts which with each other twine,
 " Are forc'd asunder, never more to join!
 " And smiling forms, once blest with health's best bloom,
 " Thro' sorrow's blight, sink timeless in the tomb!
 " Ah! woe is me! from what can comfort rise
 " When all we liv'd for no more meets our eyes!
 " A curse on war which parted you and me!
 " Would I were now in the same grave with thee!"—
 Excepting such, free Britons live from care,
 Lamenting only that war's evils are;
 For, thro' their lives, the happy mortals here
 Know not its horrors, save from what they hear.
 O, may th' Almighty's over-ruling hand
 Thus long protect our well-beloved land!
 And may some bard, when age on age has roll'd,
 Sing, " Britain's welfare" which my muse has told!

19. Then blest is he, who, in this favour'd realm,
 With kindred round him lives, retir'd, and calm;
 Whose worldly state (heaven send all mortals such!)
 Allows enough, not giving overmuch;

Who, not dependant on the great's caprice,
 Is his own friend ;—what patronage like this !—
 Whose name, not bandied as a faction's tool,
 Meets no man's pity, nor the sneer of fool ;
 And comes in nought before the public eye
 To sail the sea of notoriety ;
 Proud thro' applause, or gall'd by censure, shown :
 They live most happy who live most unknown !—
 Public opinion who can hold at will ?
 To please one fool is hard ! ten million harder still !—
 Happy such man !—we meet in his domain
 No aching hearts, from him deriving pain :
 All live in peace : the very beasts seem blithe !
 The reaper whistles as he whets his scythe :
 And ragged ploughboys, as they turn the earth,
 Wish their kind master never may know dearth :
 All hands, all hearts, in emulation seem,
 Not for their hire, but for the love of him.
 More taught by books, than by an actual ken,
 He mourns to think that there be wicked men ;
 But not severe in his decisions, still
 He thinks them good until he finds them ill.
 Should scandal's voice find entrance to his ears,
 He puts no confidence in what he hears ;
 But tells the man, from whom such tale he learns,
 “ Mind not your neighbour's, heed your own concerns.”
 At heart he wishes good to all mankind :
 His deeds evince the wishes of his mind :
 Peace he promoteth : strife he makes to fall ;
 His name with praise repeated is by all.

No man he hates ; for evils done him, he
 Requites with kindnesses his enemy.
 To him in vain no creditor pleads poor :
 His answer is, " Your money—to be sure :
 " I quite forgot you : this, indeed, was wrong :
 " But do not next time credit me so long."
 He never weepeth over wealth mis-spent :
 He gripes no tenant to possess his rent ;
 But takes his hand, and, with a courteous smile,
 Says, " I'm not urgent : let it stand awhile."
 The word " Benevolence" graven on his door,
 Shows him the patron of the woe-worn poor ;
 Who, should they be by an oppressor scourg'd,
 Will send them help, altho' he be not urg'd.
 The husband, wife, the father, daughter, son,
 When trouble comes, ask him what should be done :
 He gives advice, or money,—as they chuse !
 The widow thanks him that he fill'd her cruise :
 The growing orphan, with his tender voice,
 Calls him his " Sire," thro' gratitude and choice :
 Thro' him see striplings thriving in a trade :
 He gives a portion to each virtuous maid ;
 And finds her then, to make her still more glad,
 A good fond husband to partake her bed.
 He never shuns the peasant in his way,
 But gives " good morrow," or, " the time of day :"
 To him all come, and comfort find at need :
 The naked clothing get ; the hungry bread :
 To him the busy worldly men we find
 Flock, to relax their lassitude of mind ;

Amaz'd, but pleas'd, to have a lone spot found
Where virtue reigns, tho' vices swarm around.—
All, living thus, are blest, the wide world thro'!
Such life I wish! to all men wish it too!!!

EPISTLE VII.

ARGUMENT.

1. A creative power brought to light from observation of the grandeur of nature.
 2. On the amazing and incomprehensible power of God.
 3. Religion natural to man in whatever state he is found.
 4. Religion shewn to affect different minds in different manners.
 5. The inconsistency of scepticism.
 6. The good effects of religion destroyed by over zeal.
 7. Superstition hostile to the true spirit of religion.
 8. The intolerance of a bigot, and the fallacy of his notions.
 9. Prejudice the cause of religious intolerance.
 10. How truly admirable the character of a humane and liberal minded clergyman is, and how beneficial to the world in general.
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1. **WHEN** Nature's grandeur, and design of plan
In all its works, are ponder'd on by man,
The mind's ideas, as their courses roll,
(However roughly printed on the soul)
Some way or other, carry in their folds
Thoughts of a Power Creative; who upholds
Whate'er is made, with universal ken :
The mould of nature, as the ways of men.

Who has not oft a piece of money paid
To see machinery by shrewd hands made?—
Turning our eye to the room's corner, there
We see our globe, suspended, as in air :

And the moon shown, in growth, or in decay,
 Retain'd in orbit by this mass of clay.
 Lo ! Saturn, Venus, Mercury, and Mars,
 In order come, in shape of little stars :
 And view the Sun, at distance from the whole,
 Round which the planets of our system roll.
 Now mark, expounded clearly to the sight,
 Earth's rot'ry motion which brings day and night :
 Its motions also which to nature bring
 The season's changes—Autumn, and the Spring !
 All so contriv'd, that, when before their shelves,
 One thinks they give their motions to themselves.—
 Turn round—Automatons, as life large, seen,
 In motion keep, carv'd with the human mien ;
 And in each movement that they make, we see
 The forms of nature ; as in you, or me.
 Dogs, tigers, cats, upon the self-same plan
 Move, to and fro, well made as is the man.
 Here the big elephant his huge trunk twirls ;
 And there in action behold frisking squirr'ls :
 While spiders, worms, with the least reptile vile,
 Crawl by the side of crocodile from Nile.—
 Do we not marvel when we enter, how
 Such things were made, and plac'd as they are now ?
 And say we not, as we each wonder view,
 “ He was ingenious who could all this do ? ”
 Now here, now there, we look, and cry each time,
 “ 'Tis strange ! 'tis grand ! 'tis awful ! 'tis sublime ! ”
 Which most to praise, we know not ; that or this :
 So judgment dazzles multifariousness !

From this inspection of man's genius hie.
 Why man's works praise when Nature's are so nigh?
 What order reigns thro' all Creation's course!
 Mark gravitation, and attraction's force
 In inert matter; mark the land and sea
 To each oppos'd, yet keeping harmony;
 The heaving surges broken on the strand;
 And active ocean sparing passive land.
 Mark animation claim allotted sphere:
 This body nourish'd, that destroy'd, by air,
 As Neptune's subject, or as Terra's care.
 See how the seasons come, and disappear:
 Spring, summer, autumn, and the winter drear,
 Alternate visits pay unto the earth,
 To sow, rear, ripen, and fix chains on dearth.
 Behold! the day its stated periods knows:
 Its hour of rising! and its hour to close!
 And then the night, to spread its darkness, stirs
 Along the surface of the universe.
 Go out by night, and in the starry way
 View meteors, dancing to the lunar ray;
 Which shows all nature peaceful in repose:
 No noise existing save the wind that blows!
 Lost in amazement, while the night hours run,
 Wait the appearance of the radiant sun:
 Now, when the glimmer of the morning breaks,
 Night's stillness flies, and noisy bustle wakes:
 Then, see the birds, when light's first rays begin,
 How pleas'd they flutter, and how clear they sing:

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View horses, dogs, sheep, cows, each living kind,
 With action gifted use it for some end :
 And 'midst the group, mankind, forsaking bed,
 Go forth to labour and obtain their bread——
 With works of art compare this ; and confess,
 Fine tho' they be, they do not equal this !—
 Things, great in fact, near greater things when brought,
 Sink in comparison to almost nought.
 A giant ten feet notice draws when seen :
 Yet ends this notice when one comes fifteen !
 And could one twenty feet our eyes assail,
 These, both, would look like minnows by a whale !
 Thus human works by nature's labours set,
 Seem like small mole-hills to St. Arrarat !
 And in their makers difference we see,
 As length of hour is to eternity !

In mortal art behold the stretch of power,
 To give an impulse for a day, or hour !
 But Nature's workman built by other laws ;
 Form'd powers that know not to retard, or pause ;
 Whose springs need not renewal, or repair,
 In substance temper'd for the work they bear,
 Retaining impulse which at first was given—
 Construction worthy of the hand of heaven !

'Then say what form'd the earth, the air, and sea ?
 What form'd the planets ? and the sun we see ?
 What secret causes fertilize the sod ?
 What makes the seasons to revolve ?—'tis God !!

2. To soar to God the mind of man's unfit :

The thought surpasses our contracted wit :
 His mighty power his splendid works proclaim :
 He rules all nature, ruling free from blame :
 No where perceiv'd, yet ev'ry corner in,
 He nothing constitutes, and ev'ry thing :
 From view remote, tho' ever in our sight,
 His form is hid amidst excessive light :
 Omniscient he ! what's present, past, to come,
 A glance can show him ; and a moment sum :
 Without beginning, and without an end,
 Nothing exists but he can comprehend.
 In heaven above, as on the earth below,
 All things conspire Omnipotence to show.
 Look to the sky—lo ! in extent of space
 Each brilliant star has its allotted place :
 From each what lustre beams upon the sight :
 Illumin'd masses of eternal light !
 Of heat and light thro' him is fed the source :
 He guides the planets, and the comet's course :
 Behold, thro' space, how rapidly they're shot
 In all directions—yet they jostle not !
 Look to the earth—thro' him, its bosom see
 Maintain its dwellers with fertility :
 He made thy body, man : he made thy mind :
 He made each species which on earth we find :
 He bids the lawless elements, at will,
 To rise—they rise !—to cease—and they are still !
 His word gave birth ; and things created, all
 Float on his breath, to flourish, or to fall.

Worlds roll'd on worlds, on natures natures pil'd,
 By him created, are by him upheld!
 So great a Being how can words express?
 His throne's eternity! his kingdom space!——
 Hold, powerless speech—from rash endeavour pause—
 What can describe the Universal Cause!!!

3. Thoughts of this Being, in the mind excite
 Awful ideas, which to praise incite:
 The soul conceiving, when this power's its friend,
 Things bring their courses to a prosp'rous end:
 As when adverse, the angry power will speed
 To blast the projects which the impious lead.

See a wild savage (in the south, or north)
 Devout and prostrate, pour petitions forth
 To stars, or moon, a lump of wood, or earth,
 'Gainst dangers, rapine, pestilence, and dearth.
 Behold another (civiliz'd in style)
 Fall down, and worship, in a vaulted aisle,
 With like petitions, offering a prayer
 That the true God may keep him in his care.

Nature appears to build within the soul
 Of all her children, at whichever pole,
 A hidden structure in the complex plan
 To make religion natural to man.
 Hence in all men (when the idea's flight,
 However wildly, brings this power to light;
 In vivid lightning, the clouds, mist, or breeze,
 The rattling thunder, or the roaring seas,

The heavenly bodies, or the sculptur'd clod ;
 All, savage emblems of Almighty God ;
 Or revelation, with inspir'd decreë,
 Outlines his figure Unity in Three :)
 An instinct leads to venerate the throne :
 A gilded image ! or the three in one !

4. As the ideas differently twine,
 Our tempers lead, or reasonings incline,
 So many forms religion's moulds disclose ;
 Shap'd to the mind from whence the figure flows.—
 Some make religion dismal, and austere,
 Harsh to themselves, to other men severe ;
 They judge of merit by external mien ;
 And think that virtue in the port is seen.
 With such, all those who laugh, or touch a card,
 Or sing, or dance, from heaven will be debarr'd ;
 While sober minded, the demure, and tame,
 Ascend to bliss ; as sparks mount up from flame !
 Many hold manly, and a proof of wit,
 To scoff and cavil at religious writ,
 By word of mouth, or with blaspheming pen ;
 Saying, “ for women 'tis, but not for men
 “ To credit priestcraft, and the stories told
 “ How the true church rose in the days of old ;
 “ And how its base progressively was laid
 “ By Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Peter's aid !”
 Yet, few, at heart, believe religion null ;
 Be their turn witty, profligate, or dull.

5. Go, shun indulgence sceptic—fly from ease—

Embark and trust your fortune to the seas.—

Men say at home what they recant abroad !

A life of peril shows the power of God !

When, o'er the ocean the rough tempest raves ;

And with its fury tosses, on the waves,

The batter'd ship, in which you sail, confin'd

The billow's football, and the sport of wind,

'Midst rugged rocks, which threaten, from the deck,

To dash the vessel to a sightless wreck ;—

Would you proclaim, with peril in your eye,

“ All this I see ; yet God I still deny ?”

Would you not rather say, on suppliant knee,

“ Protect me, God, for I believe in thee ?”

Then why believe not when the storm is o'er ?

A truth at sea must be a truth on shore !!

The sight is pleasing, when a valiant tar

Shows fear of God, altho' no fear of war !

The sight is woeful, when a soldier brave

Denies his God on brink of honour's grave !

O, mortal pride ! as feather, light when weigh'd !

What art thou, man ? of what ingredients made ?

O, child of dust ! where would presumption soar ?

Behold God's works ! admire ! and adore !

6. Turn from the sceptics—shun their sinful ways—

Turn, and behold (what must our pity raise)

Men, who respect and wish fair Virtue's weal,

Destroy their purpose by an over zeal ;

Forcing Religion (Virtue's dearest friend !)
 From calm good will unto malev'lent end,
 To sow dissension, and feed hatred's springs
 'Tween sons and fathers, nations and their kings.
 Who that loves virtue, who that loves his kind,
 Can see such discord with an untouch'd mind?
 What social soul but must lament the sight
 Of that dividing which should most unite?
 From cause of comfort turning cause of fear!
 Mankind lament that such sad errors are.

Extremes are bad—as blameable is he
 Who sounds damnation over land and sea,
 As he who teaches, with unhallow'd tongue,
 “ Religion's false ! hear, old men and ye young ! ”

7. Shun all the winds which superstition fan ;
 They're to religion as the plague to man !
 What, tho' I bathe a hundred times a day ?
 Am I more fit on this account to pray ?
 What, tho' a Bible ever grace my room ?
 Will that avert the ague, or the rheum ?
 What, tho' God's name be printed near my door ?
 Will that keep famine from approaching more ?
 What are such forms ?—Religion, say the Turks !
 Such faith, methinks, is useless without works !

8. Yet, forms are trifles, for reproof too light :
 Men's prayers, not postures, please in high heaven's sight !
 The good man's prayer ascends to heaven, as soon
 Before or after morning, mid-day, noon :

On music's peal 'tis wafted to the sky :
 Nor flies it duller without symphony :
 To kneel in prayer to heaven shows rev'rence fit :
 Yet same is homage when we stand or sit :
 To pray in church, before an altar's good :
 But just as well to pray in field or wood.
 O man ! think not by surplices or lawn,
 A church to heaven one inch is nearer drawn.—
 Then join not bigots, who, presumptuous, rail,
 Against all those not circled in their pale.
 To what do ravings of a bigot tend ?
 Incomprehensible to comprehend !!
 It flatters pride, no doubt, in the poor sot,
 To think he knows what other men know not :
 But then he heeds not, in the scale to throw,
 What's false seems truth, when truth we do not know !
 Nor to his fev'rish reason is it shown,
 Ten million shapes has error, truth but one !

Shall man assert, that God, who made us all,
 Elects one man, and dooms another's fall ?
 Shall man, who knows not what next moment brings,
 Exclaim " My neighbour's on perdition's wings ?"
 Or say, " The world woe waits, and all thereon ;
 " But joy for us who as elect are known ;
 " And while we taste a life serene and pure,
 " The fiercest sorrows others shall endure,
 " For sins on earth, hereafter doom'd to be
 " In fire and brimstone, thro' eternity ?"—
 O shame ! O horror ! yet weak mortals dare
 Against each other hourly thus to swear :

Feeding hell's flame (ah! premature in speed!)
 With all who worship by a different creed.
 Beware ye bigots—a deluded crew!
 Love ye your neighbour as yourselves ye do?
 Peace, madmen! peace!—do as religion bids—
 As you'd be dealt by regulate your deeds.
 Elect yet hate!—'tis mocking the All Wise!
 'Tis pride! 'tis folly! nay, much worse, 'tis vice!

Say, bigot, say, is't but to pleasure thee,
 That sun beams heat give and resplendency?
 And but for thee does Luna's feeble ray,
 Illumine a passage thro' night's dreary way?
 For thee alone is't that creation's mould,
 Exists at present, and was cast of old?
 For thee alone do seasons rise and fall?
 Thou shar'st these blessings—so mankind do all!
 Then wherefore blazon (O fanatic goose!)
 That God made heaven solely for thy use?

Look round enthusiast: use thine eyes, and see—
 What more than others does great God for thee?
 The water drowns thee if thou canst not swim!
 Unstable Fate subjects thee to its whim!
 Mind's pains afflict thee! body's ills infect!
 Cold numbs, rain wets thee—yet thou art elect!!
 Thou diest—thou mould'rest in the dust—then know,
 Just what thou art, am I to heaven, below.

Remember fool, the hand that fashion'd you,
 Form'd the rhinoceros; and emmet too;
 The whale; the otter; ox; sheep; dog; and mole:
 Then, dare you say you are to God the whole?

Review his works; and learn, pride, as they pass,
Man is mere atom in creation's mass!

To all his works God's grace and care extend,
Diffus'd around, like space without an end:
Nor are mankind, or more or less, his own,
As black, or white, as swarthy, or as brown.
We know thro' reason (breathe we here or there)
God 'tis made all men—all men are his care!

9. Who does not laugh, to hear a fool declaim
On future judgment, and eternal flame?
Who does not weep, to hear a wise man tell,
That, save his own sect, all must go to hell?
Such are the native feelings of a mind,
When strange to prejudice of any kind.
'Tis solely prejudice that judgment clogs:
Hence crown makes king, on William's head as Log's!
Here rise all strange opinions which we see:
The slur attach'd to name of bastardy!
A poor man's bastard cypher is, how then
Can prince rank his with knights, and ducal men?
Beget one bastard you will meet rebuke!
But kill ten thousand men, you're made a duke!
Show guineas—then you've virtue, rank, and sense!
But, say, what are you if you show but pence?
A beggar's hang'd who robs you of a mite!
Prince plunders nations, and the deed is right!
Law's voice makes wife! the call of nature whore!
Are these not prejudices?—why name more?—

Subdue but prejudice, with ease, alone
 We found a church, or overthrow a throne;
 For this once done (whatever the affair)
 We draw ten millions by a single hair!—
 'Tis this, and but this, (true it is, tho' sad!)
 In points of doctrine which men's heads turns mad.
 From this, a papist, whom strict Luth'rans meet,
 Seems Satan waddling on two cloven feet!
 From this, a methodist is heard to roar,
 "Heaven holds our church, but has no room for more!"
 And hence, prim quakers, be they old or young,
 Must feel the spirit, or else hold their tongue!—
 In mind men's habits notions strange instil;
 Yet Truth is one and indivisible!!
 Once blinding prejudice throw off, and then,
 Right, wrong, fit, unfit, holy, and profane,
 Clearly defin'd, in central focus meet,
 Alike in Britain as in Otaheite.

10. Forsake it then—and from all bias freed,
 For pleasure's sake, as for instruction, lead
 Your steps to where is placed the bless'd abode,
 Of a good priest, the minister of God.—
 With port respectful touch the portal's latch:
 Lo! pious group, who, in expectance, watch
 The threshold's op'ning, for admission where
 The reverend pastor edifies in prayer.
 Some count Ave Mary; Paternoster some;
 From worldly objects to religion come:

And others say, less bigotted to form,
 " Be with us, God, and keep us from all harm."
 Now mark the priest who opens wide the door :
 His holy head by time is silver'd o'er ;
 And the white locks, which on his shoulders fall,
 Impress respectful reverence from all ;
 And bring thro' choice (what monarchs scarce command !)
 The kneeling posture, and the kiss of hand.
 A little bent, the burden of his years
 In all his motions visibly appears ;
 Yet, from his aspect, one, as clearly, sees
 His youth was temp'rance, and his age is ease :
 And smiles benignant, which his features grace,
 With self at peace declare him, and man's race.
 Nor gown nor surplice on his form is seen ;
 But meek Benevolence, and Virtue's mien,
 Outline the man, just what he is, to be
 God's priest, and lover of humanity.
 No hireling he, who, for the sake of pelf,
 Preaches of Jesus to enrich himself ;
 And here and there points out salvation's way,
 Just as parishioners have gold to pay.
 All men he welcomes : and to poor and rich
 Unfolds plain truths, not heeding which is which :
 Or if he make a diff'rence, we see
 In favour 'tis of poor, and low degree ;
 Who most, he thinks, religion's aid require,
 Debarr'd from worldly comforts of the high'r.—
 He takes his place—his children, and his spouse,
 Around him station'd, admiration rouse :

A Bible open on his table lies ;
 And many a well-us'd book of pieties.
 All now come in, and with devotion stand :
 He kneels, and prays to the attendant band.—
 Think you 'tis Sunday ? ah ! you judge amiss :
 All days are Sundays to a man like this !
 From first to last, alike to him, days run
 That temp'ral good, or spiritual, be done !
 Think you 'tis church, where he, thus kneeling, prays ?
 His home's a church, wide open, on all days,
 For those who chuse to seek him for advice
 In aiding virtue, or restraining vice.—
 Now ends his prayer : now sounds the loud Amen :
 Advancing, many stand around him then :
 Yet not without a downcast look of fear
 Dare they approach his holy person near.
 As friend he talks to each of them, as wont :
 To them who bring their infants to the font,
 He shows the blessing unto mortals given
 In children nurtur'd in the fear of heaven ;
 And tells that good and virtuous children are
 A source of comfort ; if reverse, of care.
 When lovers come, to join in common fate,
 From him they duties learn of wedded state ;
 Which, 'stead of blessing, he declares is curse
 Unless they love for better and for worse.
 Constraint removes ; and all, without reserve,
 Him nearer press :—he says, “ How can I serve ? ”—
 One speaks—“ Inform me what are Virtue's laws ? ”—
 “ My son,” he answers, “ worship the First Cause ;

" Be just in dealing ; to a promise true ;
 " As you 'd have done, so in like manner do ;
 " Help those who need ; and those who mourn console ;
 " Relieve the body ; and refresh the soul ;
 " Love all mankind ; and do what good you can—
 " Behold the virtues of a mortal man."

He, thus, with counsel, edifies the whole :
 Of each sad face he asks, " What ails thy soul ?"
 Some weep for parents dead, and in the grave :
 For kindred some fear danger, from the wave :
 Others deplore their fortunes on the wane :
 Grievs all set forth : all consolation gain :
 He tells them weeping (so their trouble moves !)
 " God most chastises those whom he most loves :
 " Solely in piety and virtue, lie
 " Cures for distresses in humanity ;
 " However pungent, of whatever kind,
 " They will assuage the sorrows of the mind.
 " Take comfort then ; and look for better times :
 " Your grief is trivial, coming not from crimes."
 Now mark a trembling reprobate come near :
 He says, " Repent ; believe in God ; nor fear :
 " We cannot act so ever as we should :
 " Yet Heaven rejects no sinner who turns good !
 " Thou surely know'st, that for earth's mortal son
 " New life is waiting, when this life is done ?
 " Then mend thy life ; and when thou 'rt given to dust,
 " Thy soul will share in pleasures of the just."
 Few sightless feuds invade this good man's cure ;
 The flock are peaceful, like the shepherd, pure ;

But when sour enmity and strife begin,
 He timely checks it, and upbraids the sin;
 Its peril shewing, in the words of Heaven,
 "Who not forgives will never be forgiven!"
 At once, saint, priest, and lover of mankind,
 By no vile prejudice he's warp'd in mind.
 See one, approaching, ask, "How should I act?
 "Can I be sav'd, who am not of your sect?
 "Will you your sentiments unfold, to me,
 "Of Luther, Calvin, and the Roman see?"
 "Be Rome your church," he says, "or Luther's call,
 "What's vice in one is vicious in us all:
 "If virtue's cherish'd, and if vice be fear'd,
 "And chaste benevolence for all men rear'd;
 "When death arrives this consolation take,
 "The keys of Paradise are like in make:
 "God judges man according to the heart;
 "God universal will not favour part;
 "But deal to all, with an impartial hand,
 "The promis'd blessings of the promis'd land;
 "Or chasten all, with the avenging rod,
 "As common children of a common God."
 He pauses here; then takes him by the hands;
 And, thus, with mildness, his instruction ends.
 "Go now, my son, and keep your mind at rest:
 "Adore your Maker as you think is best:
 "Nor chide another that he bends the knee
 "In this or that way to the Deity:
 "But look to self, and let your neighbour chuse
 "The road to heav'n which best suits with his views.

“ All, may be sav’d, alike salvation nigh :

“ You as a Papist, as a Luth’ran I.”

Now see, in charity, these last words said,

He gives him blessing, hands laid on his head.—

Now solves he questions ask’d him by the rest :

Now all dismisses, edified, and blest.—

God spare the life, and God instruct the mind,

Which, like this good man’s, benefit mankind !

A man thus living, in the holy state,

Deserves the epithet of “ Truly Great !”

Not led by prejudic’d and narrow soul

To view in part, he nature views a whole :

Not barr’d by lure of interested pelf,

He loves his neighbour as he loves himself ;

Their joys delight him ; and their sorrows pain ;

Their loss his loss is ; their success his gain :

In short, he thinks (the thought will bigots shock !)

The world his living, and mankind his flock.—

A man with such bright qualities endued,

Alone has title to the surname “ Good !”

Such man stands far above all others, high,

Like tall St. Gothard, with no rival nigh :

More great than kings ; the greatest of the great

That ever reign’d, in any time or state :

Than statesman greater known on the world’s stage ;

From Sully down to British Chatham sage :

More great, by far, than ever hero seen ;

Proud Cesar, Pompey, Marlbro’, or Eugene :

In such a man (rank, sect, excepteth none !)

The name “ God’s Priest’s shines peerless, like the sun !

EPISTLE VIII.

ARGUMENT.

1. That man, being gifted with reason, is responsible for his actions.
2. The vanity of human life shown to the full extent.
3. That death, if rightly considered, should not always be regarded by man with the eye of horror.
4. Best always to live in the pursuit of virtue.
5. The subjection of man to the power of death illustrated.
6. A future state universally believed in, and the happiness resulting to mankind from this belief.
7. Great probability of a future state.
8. Rash and fallacious to attempt to define what that state is to be.
9. Conclusion of the poem.

1. **MANKIND** exalted by their Nature stand :
Brutes Instinct guides, man thoughtful Reason's hand :
Say then—what end is answer'd in this plan ?
The use of reason in the mind of man ?
Who ever tax'd a heifer, or an ox,
Who gor'd a person with repeated knocks,
Of murder's crime ?—who would not laugh to see,
The beast arraign'd in court of equity ;
Condemn'd ; and order'd, by the law's command,
To suffer death, a flogging, or the brand ?
Would you not say, “ O monstrous ! horrid ! sad !
“ Who tried it, fools are ! and who punish'd, mad !”

Nor right nor wrong in animals we find :
 No judging faculty informs their mind,
 To teach the actions when to move, when halt :
 Compell'd by passion brutes are not in fault !
 Were reason wanting, man would, then, be plac'd
 Like brute, an actor onward forc'd to haste ;
 Impell'd to action ; and retain'd therein ;
 A guided mover on a guiding spring :
 Whate'er he did constrain'd to do, how then
 Could a responsibility remain :
 No faults could be : or whatsoever were,
 End, as begin, with the superior power.
 By Reason's gift, man is not this machine
 Wound up to run in certain stak'd routine :
 Compulsion null'd, free agents we arise :
 Knowing what's good, and where the evil lies ;
 The rein of conduct unto Reason's given,
 To guide the actions towards hell or heaven.
 And hence when crimes unto the scaffold lead,
 We say, " he justly suffers for the deed :"
 And should the passion as excuse be brought,
 We mock, and ask him, " why he us'd not thought."
 If men thus men judge, who the law offend ;
 And with death punish ; or inflict amende :
 As a transgression, in degree and size,
 Deserves severe or lenient penalties ;
 Has he not right who gave unto mankind
 The ray of reason to illume the mind
 To say, " I gave it ; how has it been us'd ?
 " If well, rewards wait ; punishments abus'd."

The right he has ! and he will ask return
 When human nature quits this worldly bourne ;
 And earth encloses, in a cold embrace,
 Her weary children who have run their race.

2. O grave ! of all the last abode confin'd !
 Thou equalizer of the human kind,
 Did man but peep into thy gloom, and spy
 The shrouds of them who in thy bosom lie :
 Did man but monthly visit, in thy mould,
 Sepulchred bodies of high, low, young, old,—
 O where could he a better lesson seek—
 So vain ! so proud ! so cruel ! impious ! weak !
 O where could he more perfect picture see
 Of what he is, and what, at last, he'll be ?

In thee, O grave, will vast ambition, wild,
 Which rul'd the world, and king of kings was styl'd ;
 Which forc'd the nations of the earth, far, near,
 To serve as footstools for its proud career ;
 And which conceiv'd the universal globe
 Too small to hold its diadem, and robe ;
 In thee, when life's short years have pass'd away,
 Will it, confin'd, have but its length of clay ?
 In thee, O grave ! will laurell'd warrior hear
 The sound of fame, and adulation's cheer ?
 Will hand once brave, which, active erst, clench'd steel,
 In thee lie numb, unfit to act, or feel ?
 In thee, O grave ! will skilful seamen, brave,
 Conceive they fight, and live on the rough wave ?

In thee, O grave! will miser find a store
 To count, as once he did, on earth, before?
 In thee, O grave! will prodigal survey
 Full bags of money, to be thrown away?
 In thee, O grave! will the shrewd merchant find
 Like bales of goods to those he left behind?
 In thee, O grave! when to thy gloom come down,
 Will monk his cowl find, and the king his crown?
 In thee, O grave! will lyre be hung for bard?
 Will genius pride feel when beneath thy sword?
 In thee, O grave! take precedence the rich?
 Or has each man on one plan built a niche?
 In thee, O grave! will dancing, feasting, be?
 O say—at wit will any laugh in thee?
 In thee, O grave! will lovely blushing maid
 Behold admirers, and hear homage paid?
 Say—who will kisses on her cheeks plant then?
 The reptile worms!—ah! not the lips of men!
 In thee, O grave! will the fond parents view
 How act their sons, and what their daughters do?
 In thy domain, will coffin'd husband hear
 The second marriage of his wife, once dear?
 O, will mankind retain in thee, cold grave!
 Ideas, passions, sentiments, they have?
 Say—when in thee will they, while ages roll,
 Feel body's anguish, and the stings of soul?
 Or—O inform me—and I'll ask but this—
 Lie they insensible, to pain, and bliss?
 Behold the grave—and then, O man! confess
 In all things life is vanity—'alas!

3. Yet why complain? if reason view aright
 God's grace and wisdom ever are in sight!
 Exclaim not, man, with unreflecting cry,
 "Why grow I old? and wherefore should I die?"
 Make life's true estimate, poor fool! and say,
 Who'd longer life wish, for an hour, or day?
 None—or, but few—for e'en youth's years will show
 That time of life is so much time of woe!
 To all come troubles, (what imports the kind?)
 On which sits care, to discompose the mind:
 For ev'ry laugh, and ev'ry smile, is nigh
 A bitter tear, or a still bitt'rer sigh.
 Too true it is!—the infant, at its birth,
 Weeps, wails, and cries, when first it sees the earth;
 But when thro' years of rough distress we've run,
 Few mourn that life's unequal web is spun.

O Death! what stings hast thou for mortals, born
 The great man's buffet, and the rich man's scorn?
 Thy bed's of roses, and thy pillow's soft,
 To men insulted by the world, and scoff'd!
 Where is thy triumph, when thou giv'st to clay,
 Poor wretches scourg'd by a despotic sway?
 Where is the victory thou gain'st (but slight!)
 O'er men despoil'd of country, law, and right?
 Where is thy boast, when tranquil, in the grave,
 Lie ill us'd Africs, and the galley-slave?
 Death! where's thy terror for the bleeding heart?
 Ah! thou'rt less dreadful than men think thou art!!

Behold—men weary, in distress, or pain,
 Seek bed with joy—what happens to them then?

If sleep come, sorrows take their flight; so death
 Puts end to woe when it suppresses breath :
 Hence, to mankind, when by disasters pressed,
 The dismal grave appears as bed of rest :
 There no revilings reach them; and therein
 They lie protected from deceit and sin.
 So spirit comes to failing host, in war,
 When friendly troop espied is from afar,
 As death's sight's grateful to the suffering good,
 Oppress'd in life by world's misfortunes rude :
 To such, alone, the look of death is dread,
 Who part from life with sins upon their head—
 This truth is sure—no terrors death can find
 For life of innocence and virtuous mind !

4. O ye who draw the vital breath of life,
 Live at all seasons, free from vice and strife ;
 Keep conduct virtuous, and the mind serene ;
 Not worse next moment than the present seen :
 Ah ! wherefore say, " To-morrow I will mend ?"
 Can'st thou tell what may happen ere day's end ?
 Nor in youth's vigour, say, " Life's not nigh done :"
 Think, days fly fast ! months, years, quick passing, run !
 O ne'er forget, death (like assassin sly !)
 Attacks, alas ! when man thinks least 'tis nigh ;
 Selecting victims, for its ghastly rage,
 From blooming youth, as from decrepit age.

5. View a wide forest—this day see its trees
 Sporting their branching beauties on the breeze ;

Some in its circuit come to their full size :
 And others daily pushing for the skies.
 While weather's fine, reflecting light of sun,
 Their leaves, like waves, float ; glist'ning as they run.
 Heaven darkens—clouds, like curling smoke, roll on :
 Some quick ; some slowly ; differently blown :
 Awhile they seem, as if in frolic gay,
 To roll, change figure, and then flit away.
 At last, while roving in expanse of heaven,
 Meet clouds electric, near each other driven ;
 Which (when they grapple in a contact rude)
 Shake the world's system with their noisy feud.
 Fork'd lightning darts ; we say " Good God !" and then
 Sounds rattling thunder in the ears of men ;
 Now distant rolling, now with vertic din ;
 As if it travell'd to affrighten sin,
 And tell to man, wherever his abode,
 " Confess your errors, and believe in God."
 Now ope heaven's fountains, and their waters pour :
 Still its volcanoes fire spit forth ; still roar :
 Now rumbling wind on rapid pinions flying,
 Like a swoln flood, sweeps all before it lying :
 Now all the elements, in dismal lower,
 Seem join'd in fight, to ascertain their power ;
 While awe-struck mortals, in amaze, admire,
 Rain's rush, wind's howl, loud thunder, blaze of fire.
 The plash of rain, 'midst hum of tempest hoarse,
 Sounds like the hoofs of marching troop of horse ;
 Where falls its stream, a bubbling foam around
 Lies, like white sheet, extended on the ground :

The thunder's noise aright imagine they
 Who fancy din of cannons in a fray:
 Thro' the cleft clouds the lightning bursts, to sight,
 Like flash of powder in a dusky night:
 Hark—from above wind's hollow murmur's thrown:
 Now vibrates earth, as dancing to the tone:—
 But where a noise in fancy shall we find,
 Like surly whistle of the raging wind:—
 A fearful storm!—the wind, rain, lightning, sleet,
 With awful fury on the forest beat—
 What sight next day?—the batter'd earth is strew'd
 With aged timber, as with sapling wood:
 Some trees, much shatter'd, long seem to have striven
 With daring effort 'gainst the blast of heaven:
 While others seem (in foliage entire)
 In peace to 've yielded to the stormy ire.—
 Does not this forest mind you of the world?
 The trees of men? the storm of death, that's hurl'd
 At heaven's command, commission'd to destroy
 The hoary aged, as the growing boy?—
 Who can with certainty say “ Storms come on?”
 This hour may threaten! the next lower begone!
 So who the time can notify, when death
 Will send on man the vapour of its breath?
 Or who dares say when it has come, “ No harm?”
 Men fall by death, as trees fall in a storm!!

6. Nor ends it here—so Heaven's decrees are told!
 Death gives a key, hereafter to unfold

The throne of God, where frail humanity,
 No longer mortal, in eternity
 Will taste pure pleasure and eternal rest :
 Not as on earth (where bad is but the best ;
 And vice has joy while virtue grieves at heart :)
 There, each will have according to desert :
 Vice punish'd be ; virtue rewarded seem ;
 Its wrongs on earth remember'd as a dream.—
 Shall this be heaven ?—O, if 'tis not to be,
 Preserve the prospect in humanity :
 Tell fond hearts parted, who each other love,
 If not on earth, expect to meet above :
 Tell dying sailors, and the soldiers brave,
 Bliss more than earth's, exists beyond the grave :
 Tell those who weep for kindred dead, or friend,
 In heaven, when met, life never will have end :
 Ground fast the hope ! all consolation left,
 To those in misery, of joy bereft :
 Say to the wretch by famine pinch'd on earth,
 Above you'll stand beyond the reach of dearth :
 Say to the beggar who has no fix'd bed,
 In heaven a pillow 's ready for your head :
 Say to the poor on whom distresses lie,
 No coin is paid to purchase ease on high :
 Say to those stripp'd of liberty and laws,
 This life 's distress to future comfort draws :
 Let this sweet cordial to the oppress'd be given,
 That tyrants reign not, nor are slaves in heaven.—
 Soothing 's the thought (to mortals on this scene,
 Of worldly strife, disquietude, chagrin,

Where man wrongs man, and weak are crush'd by strong :)
That Heaven will right, hereafter, what's now wrong.

7. All things conspire to prove a future state :
As God thinks fit, to punish, or elate.
The year's a picture, by a master's hand,
Where nature speaks, if man will understand.
In spring it rises ; in the summer blooms ;
The harvest ripens ; ~~winter~~ then consumes :
Lo ! then exhausted nature's death ensues ;
Till spring returning wasted strength renews.
So man is born ; blooms ; ripens ; and decays :
And then in death awaits reviving days.—

8. Desist to follow—more we cannot know—
Thus far we may, no farther can we go.
Did e'er a traveller start up, from the tomb,
To tell the secrets of the world to come ?
Did human ken (with all its power !) e'er fly
To view th' arcana of this mystery ?—
What forms a heaven, or composes hell,
Let no rash mortal ever strive to tell.
Who can inform how the Almighty King
Condign inflictions will on sinners bring ?
Who can expound, how the great God bestows
The heavenly pleasure which no ending knows ?
Between what is, and what is yet to be,
Stand reason's fences, thro' which none can see.—

9. Now ends my song—my lyre's untun'd—here then
 I seek retreat—farewel the haunts of men—
 Farewel thou world which I have travell'd thro'—
 I've told to others what I saw in you !
 And brought to light, in progress, as I could,
 What's useful, worthless, foolish, bad, and good !—
 But ah ! have I, while telling what I've seen,
 Applied to others, not myself, the scene :
 Have I, with labour *microscopich, shown*
 Eyes fill'd with motes, while beams are in mine own :
 Have I forgot, that censors, in world's eye,
 Should be more virtuous than the men they try :
 Have I forgot, when characters I drew,
 That men may say, “ The name chang'd, fool, 'tis you :”
 Have I forgot, that right to preach, and yet
 Reverse to do, worst error's to commit :
 Have I thus thoughtlessly my way run on.—
 I fear I have—but now the thing is done !

Farewel mankind—I hurry to retreat—
 Borne on affection, I haste, now, to meet
 The lov'd relations, unto whom (is't wrong ?)
 I tun'd my lay, and rhym'd a careless song.

Your hands, then, relatives—now, let me say,
 What faults I have, in time amend I may,
 As well in conduct, as the flaws which be
 In my first journey into poesy.
 Should I have told you not as things fall out,
 Hold my work faulty, leaving room for doubt ;
 But, if you find men painted as they're seen,
 Call me not “ dauber” out of wanton spleen.

I fear, indeed, my plan's not round and terse :
 Themes of philosophy befit not verse !
 Too much now said ; too little now express'd ;
 Some points long dwelt on ; others left in haste ;
 Perhaps you'll say, when to the end you've got,
 " Your work we've read, yet see we not its plot"—
 Or tell at once, " It is below contempt !
 " How could your pride induce to the attempt ?"—
 Well ! be it so—if ~~this my~~ labours end,
 Dislike the work, but not dislike the friend.
 Reflect on this (and make allowance then)
 'Tis the first effort of a youthful pen.
 The subject's ingrate : little thro' the whole
 To warm the fancy, or transport the soul :
 Here truth usurps imagination's place :
 Wild fiction's region best suits poet's race !—
 There, at his call, we stand near field of war—
 Swords gleam ; men shout, guns roar, and flash, afar :
 Now march the hosts, and countermarch, as bid :
 Now groan the dying : and now fall the dead :
 Now clouds of smoke the combatants surround,
 Like a thick mist arising from the ground :—
 Hid are their movements : 'midst the noise, I ween,
 Tremble spectators more than fighters keen ;
 To know how goes the issue of the day !
 And hear what friends have fallen in the fray !—
 Now we this fight see, as in Alpine snow
 The trav'lers view a storm in clouds below :
 The mass of smoke, conglomerated, lies ;
 Like pregnant cloud unto the trav'ler's eyes.

Unseen roar cannons ; now from far ; now near ;
 As they, beneath them, the loud thunder hear :
 A flash of fire precedes concussion loud,
 As they see lightning darting in the cloud :—
 Now less sound guns : diminish'd seems war's heat :
 Hark—now a trumpet summons a retreat :
 The victor host the air with shout now fills,
 Which sounds like echo among many hills :
 From whence it comes we see not, in our doubt
 We list, and think, pray, hope 'tis friendly shout :—
 At last ends strife : smoke's undulating wave
 Rolls on the wind, unveiling victors brave,
 The field possessing, while from spot of fight
 The vanquish'd troops recede in hasty flight.
 Around, thick spread, lie corpses, as we see
 On mountains stones, or shells on beach of sea ;
 So heap'd, so mix'd, so mangled, save for clothes,
 No sign could tell which friends were, and which foes.
 Their comrades seeking, now the warriors cry,
 (Men who, in battle, scorn'd to flinch, or fly !)
 As, pale and stiff, they gory corpses see,
 Endear'd by friendship, or propinquity.—
 Ah ! when the fury of the fight is past,
 Men surely feel vain honour is at last !—
 This scene of war, in fiction's realm, with ease,
 A poet changes to the vale of peace :
 And then, directly, at his word, one stands
 'Midst choirs of music, and 'midst dancing bands :
 There shows he men, reclining on the grass,
 Near maidens fair ; each with a fav'rite lass :

One makes her sit upon his knee, and sing ;
 Leers, sighs, and calls her " Little naughty thing !"
 Some, young and green, who dare not do as much,
 Show love by looks, not bold enough to touch :
 While others seem to think (in action rough)
 Men cannot kiss and handle girls enough :
 Some loving couples will, no doubt, ere night,
 Feel hour sit heavy, for this hour so light :
 This to predict requires not learning deep—
 Men among women wolves are among sheep !—
 Now could his powers unto the vision show
 Full cups of liquor, handed to and fro :
 While one, half tipsy, lies tells when truths fail,
 To give pretext to drink more draughts of ale,
 A group, as tipsy, with a vacant laugh,
 Applaud the bragger, and the bev'rage quaff ;
 Then chuse him chairman ; the top-heavy elf,
 When chair'd, is great as is the king himself !
 Fast flows the drink . now loudly chatter all :
 Some wise ! some stupid ! some inclin'd to brawl !
 Until, at last, the party done up quite,
 Some fall, some sleep, some hiccup, vomit, fight.
 Now, with small stress, he could describe, I wot,
 The next day's pickle of each fuddled sot,
 When spleen, the head-ache, and the tongue of wife,
 Assail, at once, just as each wakes to life.—
 In fiction heaven a poet rules, as earth !
 His sign wafts plenty ; and his nod brings dearth :
 There, with a word, he can command the seas :
 Let loose rough winds then lull them to a breeze :

There, he makes billows, like huge mountains, pass :
 Then orders ocean to be smooth, as glass :
 There, nature he disturbs, from pole to pole :
 Then straight serenity displays the whole :
 For there, at hand, he Neptune's trident finds !
 And pulls, at will, the bridles of the winds !
 There, hissing bolt, like Jove himself, he wings :
 Then, lightning's flash and thunder with it flings :
 There, day and night at pleasure he ~~parades~~ :
 Now gives earth light : now hides it in the shades :
 There, at his voice, the seasons spread their wing :
 In summer's bloom, he orders budding spring :
 And while yet spring descends to earth in showers,
 The choicest fruits of autumn he devours :
 So, when thro' frost the limbs of men are numb,
 He bids the warmth of lively summer come :
 And while the heats of sultry autumn glow,
 He powders earth with cooling flakes of snow :
 There, unconfin'd, without control he reigns .
 Thro' width of space conceiving hid domains,
 To earth he comes, with fiction's power, once more
 To give that form, which chaos was before.—
 Not so the poet, by Truth held in tow :
 It curbs, and says, " no farther must you go,"
 Just as the wing of Fancy, with his muse,
 Is spread, to waft him to ideal views.
 Thus, tho' slight crop come forward thro' my toil,
 (Like lab'rer working on infertile soil)
 Less blame I merit than those who are found
 To reap short harvest on prolific ground.—
 My labour, friendless, to the world I give,
 By its own merit or to die or live :

Unknown I stand a candidate for fame :
 Names grace not works! the work should grace the name!
 At praise, my heart will not too greatly bound :
 Nor censure vex me with unwelcome sound :
 In either case, with equal mind I'll try
 To hear the sentence of my destiny :
 Thank those who tell me where I err, and how ;
 And mend hereafter what is faulty now.
 We all must err : but he alone is fool
 Who keeps in error when 'tis shown by rule !
 Now, fare you well, lov'd relatives ! adieu !
 On me think often, as I think on you.
 In time, perhaps, a pleasant day will come
 When I shall see you, and revisit home :
 Or if such time should never come, be sure
 My love is with you, while my days endure.
 Ah ! what distress to mortals is so rude,
 As when their children show ingratitude ?
 And be not angry, if (for what you've done !)
 I call you parents, and myself your son.
 In your sweet dwelling be all woe forgot !
 Be mirth your heritage ! content your lot !
 In rural pleasures may your days glide on,
 To-morrow pleasanter than day that's gone :
 Such life is innocent ! would it were mine
 To rear the woodbine, and the eglantine !
 For such a life true happiness ensures
 When human conduct is as good as yours.

F I N I S.

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